

Honecker, freed from jail, heads for Chile

BERLIN (R) — Former East German leader Erich Honecker left Berlin by plane Wednesday for Chile after a court freed him from jail because he is dying, a Lufthansa airline official said. The 80-year-old communist, who suffered from terminal liver cancer, flew to Frankfurt to switch to a flight for South America to spend his last days with his family. Mr. Honecker rode in a police motorcade to Tegel airport from Berlin's Moabit prison four hours after a Berlin court lifted a final arrest warrant on corruption charges against him earlier Wednesday. The decision removed the last obstacle preventing Mr. Honecker, who supervised the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, from flying to a family reunion in Chile. He was the last passenger to enter the plane after an apparent hide-and-seek manoeuvre with news media at the airport. In Frankfurt, an airport spokesman said Mr. Honecker was to travel under maximum security in the first class, upper deck section of a Boeing 747 Varig Airlines flight to Sao Paulo, where he would transfer to a flight to Santiago. Earlier information had said Mr. Honecker would fly to Rio de Janeiro. Two policemen would escort Mr. Honecker to South America as a precautionary measure against possible attacks, he said. Another Berlin court Tuesday dropped manslaughter charges stemming from a shoot-to-kill order against East Germans seeking to flee across the cold war frontier.



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Mubarak holds talks with Assad

DAMASCUS (R) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak arrived in Damascus unexpectedly Wednesday and went straight into talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad. Syrian presidential spokesman Joubran Kourieh said they were discussing Arab-Israeli peace talks and the latest developments in the Arab World. He gave no details. The visit coincided with U.S. attacks on Iraq and with Arab attempts to win U.N. sanctions against Israel for refusing to comply with a Security Council resolution on more than 400 Palestinian expellees. Diplomats said Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Assad were to discuss both issues. Syria is also expected to try to ease the tension between Egypt and Sudan over the disputed Halaib triangle. A Sudanese leader visited Damascus last week. Mr. Mubarak was accompanied by Foreign Minister Amr Musa, Information Minister Safwat Sherif and his top political adviser, Osama Al Baz. The two leaders held a brief session of talks in the presence of aides and then met alone.

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Allied planes raid Iraqi missile sites

Attacks said limited to south; Baghdad tells U.N. it will comply with demands

Combined agency dispatches

DOZENS OF AMERICAN and allied aircraft bombed missile sites in Iraq Wednesday in retaliation for weeks of "provocations" by Baghdad that officials asserted violated the agreement halting the 1991 Gulf war.

"Preliminary information indicates the mission was accomplished," White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said. He added the "United States and its coalition partners stand ready to take 'additional actions' to assure Iraqi compliance with ceasefire terms."

Similar statements were also made by British and French officials.

"All of our planes have returned to our bases," Mr. Fitzwater said. Up to 100 American bombers were reported to have taken part.

Mr. Fitzwater said the targets were "several missile sites" in the southern part of the country. Iraq had positioned several surface-to-air missile batteries in the region, and American planners said they represented a threat to the allied aircraft patrolling a "no-fly" zone established by the allies two years ago.

Mr. Fitzwater said President George Bush had deployed a battalion task force to Kuwait to guard against Iraqi incursions. A battalion is generally 600 to 800 troops.

He said the president, who leaves office in a week, telephoned President-elect Bill Clinton in Little Rock. "The president-elect indicated his support," Mr. Fitzwater said.

"The United States and its coalition partners today took forceful actions against Iraq,"

Mr. Fitzwater said at a White House briefing after the air raids had been completed.

"Coalition aircraft at approximately 1:15 p.m. EST (1815 GMT) this afternoon attacked surface-to-air missiles and associated infrastructure in southern Iraq. Preliminary information indicates that the mission was accomplished."

He said all the U.S. aircraft had returned to bases, presumably aboard the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk in the Gulf and possibly to some nearby land bases as well.

British military officials and French military sources said in London and Paris that warplanes from those two nations — allies in a coalition formed to oust Iraq from Kuwait during the 1991 Gulf war — had joined Wednesday's raids.

One U.S. official, speaking on

Jordan urges peaceful solution

AMMAN (AP) — Minutes after reports that the United States launched air raids against Iraq, Jordan Wednesday urged a peaceful solution to end the latest showdown between Baghdad and the Western allies.

"Jordan, as always, advocates peaceful solutions to any conflict. We are against force and we support dialogue," Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber said.

Information Minister Mahmood Sharif said:

"We are sure that this is going to lead to more suffering for the Iraqi people," he said.

condition of anonymity, said the attack was a limited one, confined to the southern part of Iraq, and directed at surface-to-air missile batteries and supporting equipment.

A Pentagon official said dozens of combat and strike aircraft had been launched in the effort, and that they were accompanied by

a base in that country.

The strike was launched two years after the beginning of the Gulf war in which the United States-led coalition routed Iraq, and a scant seven days before President Bush was to turn over power to President-elect Clinton.

At the U.N., Iraq said Wednesday it would stop incursions into disputed territory with Kuwait and would authorize U.N. flights into Iraq — two demands at the heart of the crisis that provoked the U.S.-led attack on Iraqi targets.

Nizar Hamdoun, Iraq's U.N. ambassador, told Reuters television he had informed the president of the Security Council, Japanese Ambassador Yoshio Hatano, of Baghdad's compliance.

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Saddam tells air force to hit back after raids

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein told his air force and air defences to hit back after U.S.-led raids on southern Iraq.

President Saddam, addressing the country on state television and radio early Thursday after the raids, said any U.S. or Western plane in Iraqi airspace was a target.

"You men in our armed forces," President Saddam, dressed in field marshal's uniform, said.

"Men of the Qadisiya (Iran-Iraq war) and mother of all battles (1991 Gulf war), you brave men of the anti-aircraft defences, you falcons (pilots) of our proud air force...fight them the way you fought God's enemies before."

At the U.N., a Western source said the United States, Britain, France and Russia have told Iraq it should not assume Wednesday's air strikes were the end of the matter if it continued to defy the will of the international community.

Further attacks could be ordered if Baghdad again flouted a Jan. 6 allied ultimatum ordering the removal of anti-aircraft missiles from a "no-fly" zone over the southern Iraq, or if it failed to comply with provisions of an April 1991 Gulf war ceasefire resolution.

Fateh leaders to meet on evictees, peace talks

TUNIS (R) — The leadership of the mainstream Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) group Fateh will meet in Tunis for three days from Thursday to discuss peace talks and the plight of more than 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel, PLO officials said Wednesday.

The Revolutionary Council of Fateh, which has about 100 members and which is intermediate between a full congress and the small Central Council, will also discuss the results of talks with the rival Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas in Khartoum last week, they said.

The meeting will be chaired by Yasser Arafat, who returned to Tunis last night from Dakar, where he took part in an emergency meeting of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

In Dakar Mr. Arafat said the Palestinians would not take part in peace talks with Israel until Israel took back the evictees.

But an official close to the hardline Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) said in Amman that the PLO had not taken a formal decision to boycott future peace talks.

The PFLP decided at a meeting in Syria Tuesday to send an envoy to Tunis to press for a formal decision, he added.

The envoy would be Abdul Rahim Mallouh, who represents the PFLP on the PLO Executive Committee, he said.

The PFLP is one of 10 hardline Palestinian groups which formed an alliance in Damascus in August to campaign against the peace talks, which have so far failed to achieve any progress.

No new date has been set for peace talks but many officials expect the ninth round to start sometime in February, after Bill Clinton moves into the White House later this month.

The other Palestinian groups said they were dismayed by the outcome of a meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Cairo on the evictees.

Hamas and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) — the Nayef Hawatmeh faction — said they had expected the meeting to back a Palestinian decision to pull out of Middle East peace talks until the evictees were allowed back.

"We were disappointed by the Cairo resolutions..." said Ibrahim Ghosheh, the Jordan spokesman for Hamas.

"They (Arabs) should have taken a decision to withdraw from the talks and not to leave it only to the Palestinians..."

The Arab ministers ended their emergency meeting Tuesday, urging the U.N. Security Council to impose sanctions on Israel if it refused to allow back the evictees.

Hamas and the DFLP oppose the terms of the current peace talks.

Israel seeks to thwart sanctions; Palestinians say no more talks

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres left for Paris Wednesday hoping to discourage the U.N. secretary-general from recommending sanctions to punish Israel for refusing to take back more than 400 Palestinian evictees.

Mr. Peres told reporters at the airport that letting them back would reward Muslim fundamentalists opposed to peace.

A spokeswoman for the minister said he would tell U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali in Paris that unprecedented U.N. sanctions against Israel, as demanded by Arab states, would harm Middle East peace efforts.

"We will do our best to convince the Secretary-General to write a moderate report," said Gad Ben-Ari, spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

At Bir Zeit on the West Bank, the chief Palestinian peace negotiator reiterated demands for

sanctions to force Israel to allow the evicted Palestinians back from Lebanon.

"They (the U.N.) can impose sanctions. We want to see that these sanctions are effective and would compel Israel to get the (evictees) back to their homes," Haidar Abdul Shafi told reporters after speaking at Bir Zeit University.

In a separate statement, the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks announced it would not resume negotiations until the expelled Palestinians are returned.

The United States, co-sponsor of the talks that were due to resume in February, was notified of the decision, the statement said.

The announcement appeared to close the door to any face-saving compromise with Israel. It came after weeks of conflicting statements from Palestinian offi-

cials about whether they would suspend participation in peace talks.

"The Palestinian team which is committed to the peace process does not see any possibility to resume the talks before the return of the evictees to their homeland," said the statement.

Israel has refused to revoke the expulsion of the 415 Palestinians. It says they have links with the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas and other fundamentalist groups that killed 35 Israeli soldiers.

"Withdrawal on our part would be giving a prize to Hamas and that neither the Arabs nor the United Nations want," said Mr. Peres.

Despite the visits of two U.N. envoys in two weeks, Israel has refused to comply with a Security Council resolution demanding

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Israel offers to open nuclear and other sites after peace

PARIS (Agencies) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Wednesday Israel was ready to open its nuclear, chemical and biological installations to Arab inspection once peace had been reached in the Middle East.

Asked specifically about reports he would make such an offer at a Paris conference on chemical weapons later Wednesday, he told reporters:

"Surely we are talking about such a (chemical, biological and nuclear) free zone once we shall have peace, not before it."

He said some Arab countries were sceptical about whether Israel would agree to such a measure and also agree to verification and mutual control.

"Of course we shall agree to it," he said.

Asked specifically if Arab states could inspect nuclear sites such as those at Dimona, the

purported Israeli nuclear centre in the desert, he said:

"I am not offering any particular subject but surely if we shall reach an agreement and we shall have peace, then there will be mutual inspections and mutual verifications."

The United Nations conference to sign a landmark convention outlawing the manufacture, stocking and use of chemical weapons opened in Paris later Wednesday.

Some 127 countries were represented at the opening ceremony at the headquarters of the U.N. Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in Paris.

French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas declared the conference open. U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali called the treaty a "decisive advance in the history of disarmament."

U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger urged Arab states to sign the treaty banning chemical weapons, saying that such a move would be a step towards eliminating weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East.

Mr. Eagleburger's appeal was made in remarks prepared for the conference.

Most Arab countries have said they will not sign the document until Israel gives up the nuclear option, Israel has said it will sign the chemical weapons treaty.

"The fact of the matter is that linking this convention to other issues cannot affect the fate of those issues, but it will surely undermine the effect of this treaty in the one region most exposed to the danger of chemical weapons — namely, the Middle

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Israel says far-reaching progress achieved with Syria

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli and Syrian negotiators have made far-reaching progress and there is real hope for peace between the two sides, a cabinet minister told parliament Wednesday.

Health Minister Chaim Ramon, speaking in the name of the government, was responding to motions by several legislators on the future of the occupied Golan Heights.

The heights are the key issue in the negotiations. Syria wants all of the Golan back. Israel says it is ready to discuss "territorial compromise," but that the Syrians must first spell out what they mean by peace.

The Middle East peace talks resumed in December, and there have been persistent reports of parallel secret negotiations between Israel and Syria. Mr. Ramon, a member of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Labour Party, again denied the reports Wednesday.

The minister told parliament that no progress with Syria would have been possible under Israel's previous right-wing government which ruled out "territorial concessions" to the Arabs.

"In contrast to the previous government, there has been far-reaching progress (since) in the negotiations with the Syrians," he said.

Because of the Rabin government's greater flexibility, "there is hope, real hope, to make peace and ensure our security," he added.

An indication of Syria's commitment of the talks came earlier this week when Arab foreign ministers met in Cairo to discuss Israel's Dec. 17 expulsion of 415 Palestinians.

The ministers, including Syria's representative, said the expulsions threatened the peace talks, but they stopped short of suspending Arab participation.

Christopher: U.S. must stay behind peace talks

Special from Washington

PRESIDENT-elect Bill Clinton's nominee for secretary of state, Warren Christopher, said Wednesday the U.S. must maintain the "momentum" behind the Middle East peace negotiations, but avoided stating that the Democrats — who boast about a democracy-centred foreign policy — would pursue such a policy with regards to Middle East countries.

In the Middle East and throughout the Gulf, the Clinton administration "will champion economic reform, more accountable governance, and increased respect for human rights," Mr. Christopher told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is likely to recommend to the Senate that he be confirmed as secretary of state.

Mr. Christopher, who served as deputy secretary of state during the Carter administration, said the Democrat's "democracy-centred policy" underscores Washington's "special relationship" with Israel which he described as the region's only democracy. The secretary of state-designate said the Clinton team believes that America's unswerving commitment to Israel and Israel's right to exist behind secure borders is "essential" to a just and lasting peace in the area.

Mr. Christopher said U.S. support for democracy "does not

imply a crusade to make the world exactly in our own image."

He said Mr. Clinton's policy would be "to encourage patient, sustained efforts to help others build the institutions that make democracy possible: Political parties, free media, laws that protect property and individual rights, an impartial judiciary, labour unions, and voluntary associations that stand between the individual and the state."

What can be seen as Mr. Christopher's reassuring words about the new administration's willingness to maintain the momentum behind the peace talks was coupled by harsher words towards regional Gulf powers. "We'll assume a vigilant stance towards both Iraq and Iran which seem determined to sow violence and disorder throughout the region, and even beyond."

Mr. Christopher stated as allied forces were launching a strike against Baghdad.

He further warned: "Following a decade in which over a thousand Americans were killed, injured or kidnapped by perpetrators of international terrorism, we'll give no quarter to terrorists or to the states that sponsor their crimes against humanity."

Mr. Christopher, who is known to be more of a policy implementer rather than a policy planner, said the Clinton administration would work towards

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Karadzic expects his people to approve peace plan

GENEVA (Agencies) — Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic predicted Wednesday that Serb deputies would approve a new constitution for the republic, but said he expected to have a tough battle persuading them.

Mr. Karadzic, who took international peace talks to the brink of collapse Tuesday by first rejecting then agreeing to the constitutional plan, confirmed he would offer his resignation if the Bosnian Serb "parliament" did not support him.

"I am aware that I am going to have a very hard time in my parliament, but this is the last big concession by Serbs for the sake of peace," he told a news conference before leaving Geneva for Belgrade.

Mr. Karadzic agreed to a constitutional plan, which would create a sovereign Bosnia divided into 10 autonomous provinces, under pressure from his Serb backers, including Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

He also came under pressure by mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen, who warned that the Serbs would be held responsible for the collapse of four months of

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PLO seen to have 'apologised' to Saudis for stand during Gulf crisis

By Mariam M. Shabin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A senior member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and a close confidant of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has issued an apology to Saudi Arabia for the organisation's pro-Iraq stand during the Gulf crisis, Palestinian officials said Wednesday.

The "apology" was issued by PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) during a visit to Saudi Arabia earlier this month, the officials said.

It was not immediately known how the Saudi leadership viewed the "apology" — a prerequisite demanded by Riyadh for reconciliation with the PLO and other Arab parties which the Saudis saw as having sided with Iraq in the crisis.

But Jamil Hilal, head of the PLO Information Department in Tunis, asserted that Abu Mazen was acting in his personal capacity and not on behalf of the organisation.

The "apology" came at the end of a speech Abu Mazen made in Saudi Arabia on the

anniversary this month of the launching of Fateh, according to Ibrahim Ayyash, a member of the Palestine National Council (PNC).

The words that Abu Mazen used "were well chosen" and there cannot be any mistake that it was an "apology," Mr. Ayyash told the Jordan Times.

According to Mr. Abu Ayyash, Abu Mazen said: "The Gulf war threatened the security and stability of the Middle East and negatively affected relations among the peoples of the Arab World. Particularly affected was the relationship between the Palestinians and the people of the Gulf states. The generosity and support that the Gulf Arab countries gave to the Palestinians have been and continue to be appreciated."

When Abu Mazen arrived in Saudi Arabia early last week, the Saudi authorities went out of their way to explain that the visit should not be taken as a sign of improved relations between the PLO and the kingdom.

An official spokesman quoted by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said Abu

Mazen was visiting Saudi Arabia to attend celebrations marking the Fateh anniversary and nothing more was attached to the visit.

No Saudi comment was available on the so-called "apology," which was issued a few days later.

"You can interpret it any way you want, but Abu Mazen was apologising. There is no doubt about it," said Mr. Abu Ayyash.

Mr. Hilal of the PLO Information Department, contacted over the phone in Tunis, flatly denied that Abu Mazen's gesture represented PLO policy.

"The statements Mahmoud Abbas made in Saudi Arabia were made in his capacity as a private citizen and not as a member of the PLO Executive Committee," he said.

Despite the denial from Tunis, the very fact that Abu Mazen is very close to Mr. Arafat is seen by many in Amman as an irrefutable proof that the "apology" had the approval of the PLO chairman.

"When a member of the PLO Executive Committee

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U.S. Marines watch over two suspected Somalis Wednesday on the spot where a Marine was shot dead Tuesday night (AFP photo)

Collapse of Addis talks redraws Somali battle lines

By Aidan Hartley
Reuters

NAIROBI — The failure of Somali peace talks in Addis Ababa underlines the clan divisions that have ripped the country apart.

Following are profiles of the main warlords, their factions and alliances:

— General Mohammed Farah Aided, 57, is chief of Hawiye Habre Gediir militia who form a faction of the United Somali Congress (USC).

A former army officer and diplomat, Gen. Aided invaded Somalia from Ethiopia in late 1990. By the time he arrived in Mogadishu, dictator Mohammed Siad Barre had been ousted and his ally Ali Mahdi Mohammed had declared himself president.

Gen. Aided's resentment to Mr. Ali Mahdi led to a clan feud which killed 30,000 in four months of fighting in Mogadishu. His faction has the heaviest weapons in the country.

He repulsed counter-attacks on the capital by Mr. Siad Barre in 1991 and 1992, when he drove the former president into exile. He tried to consolidate control over a large area of the south, the main famine zone, through a three-group alliance comprising:

— Colonel Ahmad Omar Jess, head of militia of the Darod Ogaden Mohammed Zubeir sub-clan, splinter group of the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). After fighting Mr. Siad Barre, then Gen. Aided, Colonel Jess defected to Gen. Aided in April 1992.

U.S. officials believe Col. Jess ordered the murder of 90 elders from a rival clan in his Kismayo stronghold the night before American-led forces entered the town in December.

— Abdi Warsame Isaq is Gen. Aided's third ally and head of the Dir clan militia under the name of the Southern Somali National Movement (SSNM). This clan is poorly armed.

— Ali Mahdi Mohammed, 58, leads the Hawiye Abgal militia, the USC's main rival. The United States brokered a peace pact between Mr. Ali Mahdi and Gen. Aided but the breakdown of the Addis talks illustrates their enmity.

A former hotelier, Mr. Ali Mahdi pushed his claim to leadership after Mr. Siad Barre's overthrow at a conference of Somali factions in Djibouti in July 1991. He was declared interim president but few recognised him. Mr. Ali Mahdi's power scarcely extends outside his stronghold in Mogadishu's northern Karan district.

In recent months he has built a loose alliance of 11 clan factions opposed to Gen. Aided. The major ones are:

— General Mohammed Abshir Musa, 67, and his deputy Abdullahi Yusuf who lead Darod Mejeeteen militia of the northeast Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), a rebel group formed in 1979.

A former police chief, educated at Princeton university, Mohammed Abshir was detained by Mr. Siad Barre. He is regarded by diplomats as the most articulate and moderate faction leader.

Despite spending six years in detention with Gen. Aided, two of them in the same cell, SSDF military chief Abdullahi Yusuf has led his militia against Gen. Aided in two years of feuding.

U.S.-led forces have not yet ventured into this conflict zone, a huge belt of bush dotted with wells and small towns.

— General Aden Abdullahi Nur "Gabiyo" (the poet) leads the Darod Ogaden militia of the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM).

Gen. Gabiyo was a defence minister under Mr. Siad Barre but in 1989 he was detained, sparking a mutiny of Ogaden troops.

The SPM allied with the USC until Mr. Siad Barre was ousted, but later found itself sucked into a loose Darod clan alliance that linked it with Mr. Siad Barre's clansmen once again.

The aim of the Darod alliances is to isolate Gen.

Aided.

— General Omar Haji Mohammed Hersi leads the Somali National Front (SNF) militia of Mr. Siad Barre's Darod Marehan clan.

The SNF denies wanting to reinstall the former dictator, but SNF fighters helped by the SSDF and SPM, both Darod clan groups, have made two attempts to recapture Mogadishu and in October overran the famine-hit southern town of Bardere.

— General Mohammed Said Hersi "Morgan." This former defence minister was a brutal enforcer in the government of Mr. Siad Barre, his father-in-law. He is linked with the SPM but appears to work mainly to strengthen the alliance of Darod clan family militias.

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Refusing to participate in talks except as observer is Abdulrahman "Tur" (the hunchback), who heads the Isaaq clan-based Somali National Movement (SNM), a former rebel group.

After waging a costly war against Mr. Siad Barre for most of the 1980s, the SNM declared secession of its north-western region — until 1960 ruled in Britain — from the rest of Somalia in May 1991. It refuses to take part in any future Somali government.

☆☆☆

The Somali Democratic Movement (SDM), led by Abdulqadir Mohammad Adan and Mohammed Nur Aliyow of Rahanwein clan militia.

Badly armed and politically disorganised, the agricultural Rahanwein were pillaged by militia from nomadic clans such as Gen. Aided's and Mr. Siad Barre's. They turned their southern farmlands into a battleground, causing a famine which killed 300,000.

Despite this, Mr. Abdulqadir became Mr. Ali Mahdi's vice-president while Mr. Aliyow became an Aided deputy. The two splinter groups reconciled at the Addis talks, a slap in the face for Gen. Aided.

Peace talks should not be linked to expellees — U.S.

WASHINGTON (USIA) The U.S. State Department said Tuesday the United States believes the Middle East peace talks should not be linked to the plight of more than 400 Palestinians who have been stranded in southern Lebanon since last month after they were expelled by Israel from the occupied territories.

The United States has not yet suggested a date for the parties to return to Washington to resume their Middle East peace talks, acting spokesman Joseph Snyder said. "We'll be doing that shortly."

The spokesman had no specific comment when asked about remarks by Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), who reportedly said Jan. 11 in Dakar that all Middle East peace talks should be suspended until the situation of the evictees is resolved.

"Our position is well-known," Mr. Snyder said. "We believe strongly the continuation of the talks is in the best interest of all the parties. At the same time we continue to work actively, especially in the U.N. context, to deal

with the expulsion issue. We do not believe these issues should be linked."

Noting that the United Nations secretary general is working to resolve the situation of the evictees, Mr. Snyder said: "We support his efforts and we urge the parties to resolve the situation peacefully."

He asserted there have been "changes on the part of the Israeli government's position toward these people. I don't know if it's a result of the work of the U.N., but the U.N. effort continues." Two evictees have been allowed to leave the area in southern Lebanon where they have been stranded between Lebanese forces which have denied them entry and Israeli forces which have prevented their return to Israel or to Israeli controlled territory in the so-called security zone along the Lebanese-Israeli border.

Mr. Snyder reminded one questioner that the United States supports United Nations Security Council Resolution 799, which urges Israel to return the evictees to Israel. "We think that that resolution should be observed," he said.

Rights group says some evictees unacknowledged

TEL AVIV (AP) — A human rights group says that Israel's list of Palestinians expelled to Lebanon did not match the men actually expelled, charging this reflects the arbitrary nature of Israel's punishment.

Andrew Whitley, director of the Middle East Watch based in New York, said names gathered by the group show at least six of the Palestinians at a tent camp in Lebanon are men that Israel "doesn't acknowledge deporting."

Israel has already said other Palestinians were expelled by "mistake." One has already returned home, and the other nine are awaiting transport back to the occupied territories.

"Clearly the fact that mistakes have been acknowledged... does underline the arbitrariness of what took place and the degree of confusion which could lead people being deported in error," said Mr. Whitley.

He added that "perhaps the criteria for selecting them (the expellees) was... not based on any rational considerations."

Mr. Whitley said a Middle East Watch researcher spent 10 days with the evictees in Lebanon. From the resulting information, he said, the 413 names Israel gave to the International Red Cross did not coincide with the expellees' own register of 412.

Fifteen names did not match up, Mr. Whitley said, including at least six men at the camp that Israel has not said it expelled. These names are in addition to the 10 Israel already recognised as expelled in "error," he added.

Mr. Whitley called the expulsions "a particularly flagrant breach of international law" and added his group believes "that the obligation is on Israel in order to return these persons... and then bring specific charges against individuals they feel committed crimes."

The U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution on Dec. 19, two days after the men were expelled, which called the Israeli action a violation of international law and demanded the men be returned.

Israel accused the men of being supporters of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which the government blamed for the slayings of six Israeli soldiers.

While most of the expelled men "openly acknowledge their sympathies with these organisations, the appear to have been deported simply because they were the easier ones to deport," Mr. Whitley said.

Middle East Watch does not view support of a banned organisation as a crime but also does not claim that all the expelled men have a clean record, he added.

Mr. Whitley said his group's researcher spoke with over 100 evictees, intensively interviewing 31.

According to the interviews, 15 of the men are professors, 14 are physicians and 16 are of the staff on the United Nations Relief and Works Association, which administers aid to Palestinian refugees.

The remainder are school teachers, businessmen, students or manual labourers, the group's report said.

In Brussels, European Community (EC) lawmakers on Tuesday called on Israel and Lebanon to allow international aid to reach the Palestinians.

The European Parliament's Socialist group, the EC's assembly's largest political bloc, called on Israel to "ensure the immediate and safe return" of the Palestinians.

The parliamentarians also urged both governments to allow "immediate access to international humanitarian organisations."

Rabin Morocco contacts

King Hassan II of Morocco disclosed in an interview published Wednesday that he had been in contact with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin over the expelled Palestinians.

The king also said he did not think the expulsions would hinder the U.S.-backed Middle East peace process.

The king's remarks were carried in the Saudi daily Al Sharq Al Awsat and also published in several other Gulf papers.

King Hassan was quoted as saying Mr. Rabin got himself "trapped" into expelling the men.

"He let himself be framed, and I prayed that he could get out of the net because if any peace bargain is to be struck, it is with the Israeli Labour Party," he said.

King Hassan said the message to Mr. Rabin was sent through "a special channel." He gave no specifics.

"I asked (Mr. Rabin) how can this be? The Jews of Europe hold this against Hitler and are still weeping and complaining, and here we are dispersing and expelling from their homes, and you are now committing the same mistake?" King Hassan said.

Probe finds no 'October surprise' evidence

WASHINGTON (AP) — A \$1.3 million congressional investigation has found no credible evidence that Republicans conspired with Iran in 1980 to delay the release of American hostages until after the U.S. election, according to a summary of the report obtained Tuesday.

The full document, to be released by the bipartisan congressional task force Wednesday, rejects allegations that have haunted the Reagan and Bush administrations for years.

"There is wholly insufficient credible evidence of any communications by, or on behalf of, the 1980 Reagan presidential campaign with any persons representing or connected with the Iranian government, or with those holding Americans as hostages during the 1979-1981 period," said the summary.

"There is no credible evidence supporting any attempt or proposal to attempt, by the Reagan presidential campaign... to delay the release of the American hostages in Iran," the task force concluded after an 11-month investigation.

The report itself, which runs several hundred pages, contains detailed information rebutting allegations that senior Reagan aides — among them the late William Casey who served as his campaign manager and then headed the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) took part in meetings in Europe with Iranian representatives.

The report also discusses in detail attempts by the Carter administration to achieve freedom for the 52 Americans.

The hostages were in fact freed hours after Mr. Reagan's Jan. 20, 1981, inauguration. Subsequently, allegations appeared that Mr. Reagan's campaign cut a deal with Iran to delay the release in return for U.S. weapons. This purported deal also eventually came to be called an "October surprise."

But the task force reported that, in fact, the Reagan administration in its first term "upheld the arms embargo with Iran and encouraged its allies to do the same." In its second term, the Reagan administration did sell Iranian weapons, in return for the release of Americans taken hostage in Lebanon.

The congressional leadership decided last February to get to the bottom of the "October surprise" allegations, establishing separate Senate and House of Representatives task forces.

The Senate panel, with only a \$750,000 budget, conducted a far smaller probe than the House group but issued a similar conclusion last November.

The chairman and ranking minority members of the House task force, Democrat Les Hamilton and Republican Henry Hyde, last July issued an interim report denying allegations that Mr. Bush as Mr. Reagan's running mate took part in a Paris meeting with the Iranians.

The House panel, with the help of Justice and Treasury Department agents, interviewed 230 people in the United States and around the world, reviewed tens of thousands of government documents including many classified ones, and reviewed hundreds of phone logs and credit card records.

Of the five people said to have independent knowledge of purported 1980 meetings in Madrid between Mr. Casey and Iranians, three testified under oath that they did not know about the alleged encounters, the summary said.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Court delays posting of Israeli envoy to U.S.

TEL AVIV (R) — The Israeli high court delayed Tuesday the appointment of peace negotiator Itamar Rabinovich as ambassador to Washington because of allegations he violated tax laws, the justice ministry said. The court temporarily delayed the posting until it rules on a petition by opposition Knesset (parliament) member Gonen Segev which asked the court to order Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government to reverse the appointment. In the petition, Mr. Segev accused Mr. Rabinovich of paying a fine to Israeli income tax authorities in lieu of prosecution for holding an illegal foreign bank account. Mr. Segev, a member of the right-wing Tsomet party, said the cabinet appointed Mr. Rabinovich in November before it knew about the fine which Israeli media reported last week. Mr. Rabinovich was to assume the post after U.S. President-elect Bill Clinton takes office on Jan. 20. Mr. Rabinovich, a university professor, has headed Israeli negotiations with Syria in the 14-month-old Middle East peace talks.

OAU chief arrives in Western Sahara

ALGIERS (R) — The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) chief arrived in the disputed Western Sahara late Tuesday for talks with the rebel Polisario Front after scolding member countries who failed to support OAU efforts to resolve the continent's crises. OAU Secretary-General Salim Abdull Salam said in Algiers on Monday the organisation was committed to doing all it could to achieve a just and lasting solution in the Western Sahara, where the front and Morocco have an uneasy ceasefire after more than 15 years of conflict. But he acknowledged he had no new ideas to take there. Mr. Salim arrived in the territory Tuesday to meet Polisario leader Mohammed Abdullaziz, Algeria's official news agency APS reported. Morocco claims the area while Polisario is seeking independence. Polisario leaders have said war could restart if political progress bogged down for over a year, is not made this year. Mr. Salim said a news conference in Algiers Monday that resolving the conflict was important for regional peace and stability.

Turkey reports 88 AIDS cases since 1985

ISTANBUL (R) — The number of AIDS cases reported in Turkey since 1985 has reached 88, a health ministry report said Monday. In the report submitted to the first national Turkish AIDS conference in Istanbul, the ministry said 40 Turks had died from the disease since it was first reported in Turkey. It said 48 of the victims AIDS were still alive. The report also said another 153 individuals were infected with AIDS but had not yet developed the visible symptoms.

Disciples do not want rabbi's bones

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's president touched off a holy row Tuesday by announcing that Ukraine would send Israel the remains of a Jewish sage who died 180 years ago. The trouble is, the ultra-orthodox disciples of Rabbi Nahman of Breslav say the do not want him buried in the Holy Land. Chaim Herzog's announcement, during a visit by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, was apparently aimed at improving long-strained relations between Ukrainians and Jews. But it was greeted with dismay by members of the Hassidic sect who telephoned radio stations to say it had been their spiritual leader's wish to be buried in Ukraine at the site of a massacre of Jews. The rabbi died in 1811. Each year, thousands of disciples from around the world travel to his grave in Uman. An estimated 30,000 Jews and Poles were killed there in 1788 by Cossacks. Rabbi David-Rafael Ben-Ami, a leader of the Israeli branch of the sect, told army radio he appreciated Mr. Herzog's good intentions "but certainly unknown to him is the fact Rabbi Nahman especially wanted to be buried in that very place."

UAE to ban boy jockeys for camels

DUBAI (AP) — Young boys will no longer be taken to train as camel jockeys if a proposed new law comes into force in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) later this year, the official UAE news agency reported Tuesday. The newly formed UAE Camel Racing Federation has proposed a law to prohibit the use of these young boys, often between the ages of four to seven from riding in the local races, said the news agency, WAM. There have been many incidents in some Asian countries, particularly Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, where police have foiled bids to smuggle young boys, sometimes kidnapped or brought for a small amount, to Gulf countries to take part in camel races. WAM quoted a source in the federation as saying: "The federation has received instructions from higher authorities ordering it to return any young camel jockey to their parents as soon as possible." The federation is to take stern measures against violators in line with the new law, which is to come into effect in September this year, according to WAM. The source told WAM that one of the main reasons for the new law will be to bring the sport in-line with international standards and make it a more prestigious one. Camel racing is a national pastime in the Gulf countries with millions of dollars being spent each year in competitions.

Eritrean rebel leader treated in Israel for malaria

TEL AVIV (AP) — The leader of Eritrea's main rebel faction was secretly flown to Israel for malaria treatment and awakened from a deep coma after several days of care, Israeli television reported Tuesday. Isais Afewerki, who would become Eritrea's prime minister if the Ethiopian province declares independence in an April plebiscite, arrived in Israel last Wednesday aboard a U.S. transport plane. "The Americans and the Eritreans asked us if we could take care of him. We were the closest place with proper facilities," said Israel's foreign ministry spokesman Elyav Manor. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres visited Mr. Afewerki at Tel Hashomer hospital near Tel Aviv Tuesday, two days after he awakened from a coma caused by cerebral malaria. Mr. Peres said he expected an independent Eritrea to be "an important friend" of Israel in the Red Sea region. Mr. Afewerki, sitting up in his bed, told Israeli television: "Unfortunately, I'm here on sick leave. I should have been here on a formal visit. I hope I'll make it in the coming few weeks when I get back home and recover completely." The television said another leading member of Mr. Afewerki's faction was also treated for malaria at Tel Hashomer, but had been in better condition from the beginning.

'Illegal' arms shipments case on trial

ORLANDO (AP) — Repeated warnings by undercover federal agents that shipments of U.S. military weapons to Uganda and Liberia were illegal were ignored by two arms merchants, a prosecutor said Tuesday.

R. J. Galt, a lawyer for four defendants — a former Egyptian army colonel and two American residents — argued in federal court Monday that their clients were enticed by overzealous agents of the U.S. Customs Service.

The U.S. government charges that the three men and a woman conspired to illegally export 400 TOW anti-tank missiles and 34 launchers to Uganda for nearly \$19 million.

In addition, two of the defendants — former General Mounir Fahmy-Baronum and New York businessman Nezihi Kent — are charged with conspiracy to smuggle Chinook helicopter parts to Libya for \$15 million.

Stephen Arnold, a U.S. Customs agent, testified that he and other undercover agents set up an Orlando import-export company that was to obtain and ship the weapons for the defendants through three countries.

He said the undercover operatives emphasised to their clients that they would violate arms embargoes placed by the United States on some countries.

But lawyers for the defendants said that no agreements had been reached and that no money changed hands.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
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مكتبة الامم

ESCWA likely to stay in Amman

By Nermes Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is more likely to decide to pick Amman as its permanent base after its Jordanian Executive Secretary Tayseer Abdul Jabbar completes his four-year term at the end of this month.

Under the ESCWA statute, a national of the country where it is headquartered cannot head the organisation and, based on this, a new term for Dr. Abdul Jabbar would preclude any ESCWA decision to set up permanent base in the Kingdom.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Dr. Abdul Jabbar said that he had declined to accept a new four-year contract when his current term ends Jan. 31. A new executive secretary will be named next week by the U.N. General Secretary. Dr. Abdul Jabbar said his decision "will implicitly or tacitly be taken into consideration" when a decision is made by the U.N. headquarters over where ESCWA will be based.

ESCWA was based in Beirut until the Lebanese civil war forced its move to Baghdad in 1977. Subsequently, the Gulf crisis, which erupted with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, prompted a further move to Amman.

During the 16th annual session of the commission in Amman in September, the first to be held after the Gulf crisis — Lebanon, backed by Syria, lobbied to return the ESCWA headquarters to Beirut. However, ESCWA members put off a decision until May, when a panel entrusted with the task will meet the planning minis-



Tayseer Abdul Jabbar

ters of the member states.

Jordan is expected to intensify efforts to convince member countries of ESCWA to keep the offices in Amman and Dr. Abdul Jabbar expects that these efforts will bear fruit despite the strong counterforce from the Lebanese government. He says that the strongest card in Jordan's hand is its continued state of stability in a region which has faced several crises and conflicts during the past few years.

The continued state of uncertainty and tension in Lebanon, despite efforts at full recovery, may weigh heavily in Jordan's favour when a final decision is announced in May.

According to Mr. Abdul Jabbar, Jordan is required to provide ESCWA with a suitable offices building as well as conference facilities as a condition to its continued presence in the Kingdom. In return, however, Dr. Abdul Jabbar is quick to point out, ESCWA has a bi-annual U.N. budget of \$55 million in foreign exchange which is beneficial for Jordan's economy. ESCWA also

employs a third of its 350-strong staff from the host country.

The overall goal of the commission is to initiate and facilitate concerted regional action for the economic reconstruction and development of the region, to raise the level of economic activity in Western Asia and to maintain and strengthen the economic relations of the countries of the area, both among themselves and with other parts of the world.

Prominent among the goals of ESCWA, which was established in 1973, is the promotion of regional self-reliance through fostering technical and economic cooperation among its member countries. The commission also acts as a "think tank" contributing to the enrichment of development literature.

"These services will be more easily available to Jordan if ESCWA sets up permanent base in Amman, since there will be no travel budgeting for our experts who will make their expertise and knowledge available to ministries and concerned development institutions," Dr. Abdul Jabbar said. The commission does not charge member countries for its services but has to make special financial allocations when such a request comes from a country other than the one it is based in.

Dr. Abdul Jabbar, who holds a doctorate degree in economics from the University of Southern California, served as minister of labour and social development in Jordan for one year in 1984. Observers expect that he will be brought back to the post or another ministerial level position in March when a reshuffle of the Prime Minister Sbarif Zeid Ben Shaker government is expected to take place.

Queen Noor distributes certificates to nursing students

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Health strives to expand nursing and midwifery education in Jordan and to raise the standard of training of nurses to cope with the growing needs in health services, Minister of Health Aref Bataineh said Wednesday.

Addressing a ceremony for the graduation of a new batch of nurses and midwives held at the Palace of Culture under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, Dr. Bataineh said that the Health Ministry was now involved in boosting the capacity of the existing nursing colleges and at the same time providing them with qualified staff.

The Queen distributed diplomas and awards to graduates.

UNRWA department to move to Jordan

AMMAN — The Education and Audit Departments at the headquarters of United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Vienna will be moving to Amman by June or July this year. Other departments will gradually follow suit, probably within two years, according to UNRWA officials here.

In the November issue of its news letter the agency's Amman office said the Commissioner General of UNRWA Ilter Turkmen had decided that the departments will cease functions from Vienna and will be established at the UNRWA headquarters branch in Amman in July of this year. The news letter quoted Mr. Turkmen as saying that he decided on the move in the interest of the agency.

By moving gradually to Amman, UNRWA will be stationed in the main centre of its five fields of operations in the Middle East: Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza, said the officials.

Jordan currently hosts the largest number (38 per cent) of all Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA. Some 23 per cent of the refugees in Jordan live in 10 camps.

UNRWA began operations in May 1950 to give emergency assistance to the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians displaced by the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict. The mandate of the agency, deriving from a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December of 1949, has been renewed over the years. The 15th mandate extends to June 30, 1993, according to UNRWA officials.

UNRWA headquarters, which first operated from Beirut had moved to Vienna in 1978 in the wake of the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war. But it said that the headquarters would be moved back to the agency's field of operations when security returns to the region.

Operating from Jordan, the UNRWA headquarters would be in charge of health, educational and other services offered to Palestinian refugees in the Kingdom and the other four areas under its mandate.

Deputies, government squabble over civil service employment, authorities

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Tension marked Wednesday's session held by the Lower House of Parliament with angry debates erupting over deputies' request for a list of government appointments in the last three years and a conflict over jurisdiction between the Ministry of Agriculture and the House's Agriculture Committee.

The government cited procedural irregularities as a reason for refusing to provide the House with a list of government appointments as requested by 15 deputies who also demanded that the House discuss the "injustice" in civil service employment.

The deputies requested a list of the names and graduation dates of all citizens hired by government agencies and public companies since the beginning of 1990 until the end of 1992 before the House begins its debate of the issue.

In a written request, the deputies said the list could enable the House to have a "serious and objective discussion" of what they called an imbalance that "intensifies the social threat of unemployment."

And since the Finance Committee reported a widespread of "paralysis, favouritism and nepotism" in government bureaucracy, "we request that this important issue be debated in the House in accordance with articles 104 and 105 of the internal regulations," the deputies said.

Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thaqan Al Hindawi said the government was not "infallible" and might have made mistakes in awarding work opportunities, which gives ground for questioning. But, he said the internal regulations of the House charted proper channels for such questioning.

He said since the debate might lead to "a vote of no confidence in the government" as pointed out by the head of the Judiciary Committee, Salim al Zoubi, the deputies had no legal grounds for demanding the list.

There are "other" means specified in the regulations for con-



The Lower House of Parliament in session Wednesday (photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

ducting such debates, he said.

Article 104, according to which the deputies made the request, says that important issues of public interest can be debated by the House if 10 deputies or more demand that in a written request.

Deputy Husni Al Sbiyah argued that the deputies were not aiming for a vote of no confidence in the government and that they had the legal grounds for demanding the list.

Echoing Mr. Zoubi, he said the request was for discussing government appointments and the debate might lead to proposing a vote of no confidence but "that is not the reason behind the request."

The House finally decided to debate the deputies' request in its session on Jan. 21 without settling the debate or asking the government to provide the list.

But if the government was to prepare the list, Deputy Abdul Rauf Al Rawabdeh said, it must also provide the House of names of deputies who tried to use their influence in securing jobs for people they favoured.

Failing to settle yet another tense issue on the floor Wednesday, the House asked its Judiciary Committee for a report on the authorities and jurisdiction of de-

puties in relation to government agencies.

The request came after an angry debate of a conflict the Agriculture Committee had with the Ministry of Agriculture last week over visits it conducted to a number of government agencies.

Mr. Hindawi said Sunday the committee had exceeded its jurisdiction by questioning Agriculture Ministry employees while visiting ministry-affiliated departments without informing the minister.

The committee denied the charge but House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat asked the panel to prepare a full report on the conflict.

In a detailed report Wednesday, the committee said it had informed the minister of its intentions to visit agricultural centres and organisations in the country in the course of its efforts to study the agricultural situation in the Kingdom.

It said its visits were not aimed at investigating or questioning officials at these sites and asked why the government was objecting to these visits.

Minister of Agriculture Fayez Khasawneh said his objection was not to the visits but to the inves-

tigation of ministry officials in a way that violated the internal regulations of the House. He said the regulations identified proper channels through which deputies could question government officials.

Deputy Abdul Karim Al Dughmi suggested the minister and the committee settle the issue in a private meeting but Dr. Arabiyat insisted the House debate it because it goes beyond the conflict at hand to the rights and jurisdiction of House committees.

The House will give its say on the matter after it listens to its Judiciary Committee's report.

Also on Wednesday, the House asked the government to draft a law on general union for students while Mr. Hindawi said the government will present Parliament with a draft law on teachers union next week.

The House, which started its session on a sour note with Dr. Arabiyat warning deputies to attend the House sessions on time, will hold its next meeting Sunday.

Many deputies have been missing or coming late to House sessions, causing delays and some times failure to meet because of lack of quorum.

Hassan II says Arabs do not rule out summit

AMMAN (J.T.) — King Hassan of Morocco has said in a newspaper interview that he did not hear a negative reply to his call for convening an Arab summit meeting from any Arab country he visited during October and November.

During the tour, the king said, he discussed the question of holding a summit meeting and found that differences and problems do exist at the level of leader to leader but "these problems were not of a irresolvable nature."

In an interview with the London-based Al Sharq Al Awsat and the Jordanian daily Al Dustour King Hassan said that at the time of his tour the U.S. presidential election was at its peak and everyone had to wait to see the outcome of the polls.

Asked why he visited five countries only during his tour, King Hassan noted that he visited Syria, Egypt and Jordan as they were "confrontation states." But he also visited King Fahd of Saudi Arabia while he was performing the lesser pilgrimage and the president of the United Arab Emirates who visited Morocco twice a year. Asked about his

contacts with the Israelis and whether he would host Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin again, the king said that he did not play host to Mr. Rabin in the first time, but the Israeli premier had requested the visit.

King Hassan said he did not mind a second Rabin visit provided these were new elements for the two sides to agree on for their mutual benefit.

Asked whether the question of the Palestinian expellees would influence the peace process, the king expressed belief that it would not directly affect the process. But he said this problem would affect the position of the Israeli prime minister "who had fallen into a trap." However, he added, if there was a peace plan no other Israeli party than Labour could achieve it with the Arabs.

Asked whether Morocco was afraid of the influence of Algerian fundamentalists, King Hassan replied that he had wished to see the 1992 Algerian parliamentary elections take its full course in two stages and did not stop at the first stage.

Jordan, Chile sign technical agreement

By Lima Nahil
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan and Chile have just concluded a three-year technical and cultural agreement that officials say would pave the ground for a further bolstering of bilateral ties.

The agreement, which was signed by the ambassador of Chile Nelson Haddad and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning Safwan Touqan, covers fields of education, science, art, culture, sports youth, journalism, health, social development, archaeology and tourism.

In a statement after the signing of the agreement, Dr. Haddad said the pact was aimed at further increasing and enhancing friendly relations between Chile and Jordan.

Describing bilateral ties as excellent, the ambassador said that the 34-article agreement encourages exchange of visits by journalists and intellectuals as well as educational programmes and publications.

Zayadin says communist party abides by Constitution, Charter

By Masa Alal
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordan Communist Party is guided by the Jordanian people and culture and is not directed by any foreign sources, party leader Yaqoub Zayadin has said. The party's programmes are determined on the basis of the priorities and needs of the Jordanian people. Dr. Zayadin said in a seminar held on Tuesday at the Arab Youth Forum.

The party was denied a licence by the Ministry of Interior last month but Dr. Zayadin said that "Jordan needs the Communist Party more than ever."

He explained that the party abides by the National Charter and the Jordanian law, claiming that article 23 of the Constitution emphasises the rights and duties of the Jordanian workers more than the party's programme.

"We work for a Communist reality that implements social equality and raises the value of the human being in accordance with the existing laws," he said.

"Jordan has come a long way with the process of democratisation," said Dr. Zayadin "and we have proposed to merge with the Islamic and National currents since it is appropriate to unite to stand against the Israeli threat and the Western imperialism, and improve the situation in our country." But he said the party still has its differences with these movements.

He said the Jordan Communist Party is a national independent party which in 1947 called for the acceptance of the U.N. partition plan for Palestine and severely criticised for it.

The party is divided over dif-

ferences on the Gulf war as Dr. Zayadin condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait while prominent party member deputy Issa Madanat was more sympathetic with the Iraqi action. Subsequently, Mr. Madanat established his own party, Jordan Democratic Socialist Party and has applied for a licence from the government.

Attributing the failure of Communism in the former Soviet Union to the "misconduct" of its leadership, Dr. Zayadin said: "Communism did not fall as an ideology but as a model that was practised in the wrong way and the wrong time."

Dr. Zayadin said that the socialist October Revolution in Russia in 1917 had its positive and negative aspects. It turned Russia from an undeveloped to a superpower state that had contributed in liberating several countries from colonialism. "The former Soviet Union has done a lot for the Arab World in terms of armament and development projects," he said.

"The misinterpretation of socialism and bureaucracy in the institutions and factories created a class which tended to rule for its own interests, and the government abused the concept of a one-party system which is supposed to be guided by the people.

So the party was alienated from the people," said Dr. Zayadin.

He said Marxism became a religion in and off itself, and ethnicity and nationalism were ignored while concentrating on the arms race exhausted the economy.

But despite these "mishaps," Dr. Zayadin said that there could be no alternative to Marxism. "It is the only solution yet we need to reconsider some issues and avoid past mistakes."

Asked if the Communist Party has a chance of retaining its lost power in the former Soviet Union, Dr. Zayadin said "the Marxist ideology will rid itself of those who do not belong to it. There is an operation team in every Communist Party to review the application of Communism."

He said the problem with Communism is that it did not learn from capitalism, which has taken a lot from Marx. He said Communism is the first doctrine that deals with the mind and mentality and is not an atheist dogma.

Compared to Islam, Dr. Zayadin said that the core of Communism exists in the Arab Islamic culture, "Islam talked a lot about the bases of Communism and we cannot apply Communism before applying the Islamic doctrine."

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Exhibition entitled "Latin American Countries in France" at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of watercolour paintings by Jordanian artist Salam Kanana at Riwak Al Balka Gallery for fine arts, Al Fabeis City.
- FILM
- ★ Clint Eastwood's 1983 film "Sudden Impact" at 5 p.m. at the American Centre (117 min., rated R).

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Legal injustice

TWO YEARS after the United States and its allies first wreaked havoc and destruction on Baghdad, Western jetfighters returned to Iraq Wednesday evening to attack what they claim to be a potential threat to Western forces illegally roaming the skies of this war-ravaged country. Once again, the attack was launched in the name of United Nations Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy. And once again, it will fail to resolve the problems that have sown the seeds of conflict in the area.

By any serious standards, the strike exposes the hypocrisy with which the West is approaching regional conflicts of the new world order. Regardless of the message Washington sought to drive to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and of the pretext to justify it, the bombs thrown on Iraq yesterday served to remind a conflict-prone area of the double standards and selectiveness of the U.N. and its Western masters. No one could argue against the protection of civilians from oppression. But no one here believes that human considerations are the driving force behind the swift action with which the U.S. and its allies deal with Iraq. If the West is so keen on not allowing injustice to stand, why then is it lamely reacting to the killings of armless civilians in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where Serb forces are violating a U.N.-imposed "no-fly zone", in defiance of the world community. It was only this month that Israel expelled hundreds of Palestinians from their homeland in violation of international law and Security Council resolutions. And while more than 400 Palestinians continue to suffer in a makeshift camp in frozen weather conditions, the world is doing little more than sweet-talk Israel into reversing what the U.N. considered an illegal action.

Iraqi civilians should be protected. But new raids, killings and destruction will not ensure them the safety haven they seek and indeed deserve. That will only subject them to more suffering and fear. While we renew our call for democratic reforms in Iraq and stress that Iraqi resources should be directed towards rebuilding and ensuring the well-being of the Iraqi people, we cannot but condemn the hostilities against Baghdad as an unjustified and illegal encroachment on the sovereignty of Iraq. If the West is interested in securing the safety of Iraqi citizens, it claims are suffering under the Iraqi regime, it will show concern for all Iraqi people: Kurds, Shiites and Sunnis. Those people need democracy and freedom. But they also need food and medicines they are directly or indirectly denied under the bite of sanctions that are no longer, at least legally, justified.

The strike against Iraq betrays obliquely, resonates with hypocrisy and bodes ill for a region that needs to hear the words of constructive dialogue and not the rattlings of guns.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AS THE Arab League in Cairo and the Muslim nations meet in Dakar demanding that the U.N. Security Council resolutions on Palestine and Bosnia Herzegovina be implemented, the western powers are making ready to attack Iraq, said AL RA'I Arabic daily Wednesday. The paper said London and Washington continue their threat against the Iraqi people, who are defending their soil against aggression and condemning the atrocities committed by the U.N. and the U.S. Security Council resolutions. While the threats are being escalated and the war machinery being readied against Iraq, nothing is said by the colonial powers against Israel's rejection of Resolution 799 concerning the Palestinian evacuees, the paper pointed out. The British and the Americans keep bragging about human rights and the international legitimacy demanding that Iraq respect the U.N. resolutions, but they tend to condone Israel's disrespect of any of the U.N. resolutions concerning the Palestinians and condone Israel's continued occupation of Arab land, the paper continued. Since the U.N. resolutions concerning the evacuation of Palestine and nobody lifts a finger in protest against the massacring of Muslims in the former Yugoslavia, said the daily. While the threats are being levelled against the Iraqi leadership, the Palestinian deportees continue to face exposure and continue to suffer. The paper said that the western leaders who are directing their guns at Baghdad are all involved in a conspiracy against Islam and the Arabs.

SAWT AL SHAAB daily described the Arab foreign ministers' meeting in Cairo as successful and constituting a very positive step towards reestablishing solidarity among the Arab countries. The paper said that now that the Arab foreign ministers succeeded to speak with one voice, they are expected to address the U.N. Security Council demanding an implementation of Resolution 799 concerning the evacuated Palestinians. The Arab foreign ministers, said the paper, are also expected to demand that Israel be punished if it fails to comply with the U.N. resolutions. Israel, which continues to defy the world community and reject all its resolutions, considers itself above the international law, the time has come for the United Nations to deal with the situation, called the paper. It said that the foreign ministers' response to the Palestinian calls reflects the Arab governments' desire to act in concert to help the Palestinians regain their rights and to support the Lebanese government in its just and honourable stand. The Arab governments, said the paper, have been betting on inter-Arab differences hoping that the Arab governments would not take a collective action. It said now that the Arabs proved their stand at the Cairo meeting, a practical step and a meaningful action are expected from the United Nations in this regard.

French plan for Bosnia camps becomes embarrassment

By Andrew Gumbel
Reuters

PARIS — Eager to be seen as acting to stop the bloodshed in Bosnia, the French government seems to have shot itself in the foot with a proposal to liberate Serb prison camps that has drawn widespread criticism.

Foreign Minister Roland Dumas' statement Sunday that France was prepared to act alone and use force if necessary to close down the camps has caused consternation and embarrassment.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali urged France pointedly not to jeopardise international peace efforts, Serb leaders threatened retaliation against French U.N. peacekeepers and even fellow cabinet ministers sought to distance themselves from an idea some saw as impractical and even foolhardy.

"Sometimes I think people are not taking seriously enough what war entails," Prime Minister Pierre Berengovoy said Monday night in a veiled rebuke.

Defence Minister Pierre Joxe said Mr. Dumas must have been misunderstood, pointing out that French troops serving with the U.N. in Bosnia were not stationed in areas where suspected rape and torture camps were sited and could not act unilaterally.

The man Mr. Dumas planned to send to oversee their liberation, Health and Humanitarian Affairs Minister Bernard Kouchner, said U.N. resolutions did not allow use of force to open the camps.

The French media seized on the disarray, splashing headlines such as "what a mess" (France Soir) or "Dumas' own side brings him back down to reality." (L'

Libération).

The centre-right opposition accused Mr. Dumas of recklessly endangering both Muslim prisoners held by the Serbs and French soldiers serving the United Nations in ex-Yugoslavia.

"These proposals are scandalous and astonishing, based on illusion and could endanger prisoners' lives," centrist Deputy Gerard Longuet said. "I don't understand how a man with responsibility for such an important issue could make such fantastic proposals."

For once, even Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, found agreement in France when he accused Mr. Dumas of trying an "election stunt."

Struggling to avert a landslide defeat in parliamentary elections in March, the Socialist government faces growing public demands to do something about the slaughter and reports of mass rape and torture in the former Yugoslav republic.

French politicians and intellectuals have pleaded not to let atrocities continue with impunity. Some have travelled to the besieged Bosnian capital of Sarajevo in a gesture of solidarity.

President Francois Mitterrand himself made a dramatic visit to the city last June to help start a U.N. relief airlift.

His visit probably heightened pressure on his government to become ever more deeply involved on ex-Yugoslavia when allies such as Britain and the United States have been more sanguine.

Diplomats say France is also

driven by a determination not to allow the United States to upstage Europe in its own backyard. French officials bristle at the way Washington took the lead recently in Somalia.

But Mr. Mitterrand has been very cautious on military action. He and outgoing U.S. President George Bush agreed in principle last week on the need to enforce a ban on flights over Bosnia.

But he insisted the Geneva talks must be given a chance before the international community took further action.

Mr. Dumas has taken several highly publicised initiatives which diplomats say have exasperated U.N. and EC mediators trying to negotiate a peace settlement with the rival factions in Geneva.

On January 2, he made an impromptu visit to Geneva and met the rival faction leaders without prior consultation with the mediators, Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen.

Last Wednesday, the French government announced that Mr. Dumas had achieved agreement in principle to declare Sarajevo an open, demilitarised city. But the Bosnian Serbs withheld their accord and Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic said no one in Paris had been able to explain to him what the proposal meant.

"One cannot have it both ways," Jean-Pierre Langellier wrote in the newspaper Le Monde. "Either the international community pools its efforts... or else everyone acts alone in a disorderly fashion. Whatever its intentions, France will be suspected, once again, of having wanted to jump the gun."

Bosnia and Palestine — untold cruelty grows in the shadow of empty threats

By Con Coughlin

IN STRICT geographical terms, the barren hills of southern Lebanon may have little in common with the rugged mountains of central Bosnia, but there is an unmistakable parallel to be drawn between the fate of the 400 Palestinians who spent Christmas week on the Lebanese border and the thousands of Muslim refugees trapped in central Bosnia.

For it has been the profound misfortune of both the Palestinians of Gaza and the Muslims of Bosnia to have been accepted as a cause celebre by Muslim leaders throughout the world.

As far as the Palestinians are concerned, of course, this is nothing new. Even before the establishment of Israel in 1948, Muslim leaders have devoted countless hours of rhetoric to ranting about the injustices committed against the Palestinian people.

More recently, Bosnia-Herzegovina has been tripping freely from the lips of every self-respecting, politically correct figure in the Islamic World with the same passion that they once used to refer to the Palestinians.

The fate of the Bosnian Muslims at the hands of the Serbs has been roundly condemned by them as yet another example of the double standards employed by the West.

If only the Balkans contained large oil reserves, then the West would be more prepared to assemble a Kuwait-style liberation force to arrest the murderous Serbs. Or, at least, that's the implication that underscores much of the Muslim world's criticism.

And yet, with respect to the plight of both the Palestinians and the Bosnian Muslims, while

Islamic leaders never miss an opportunity to criticise the inadequacy of the West's response, they display less enthusiasm when it comes to putting forward their own plan to action.

Arab leaders, of course, argue that they have fought quite enough wars on behalf of the Palestinians. To make such claims is disingenuous. Whenever a Nasser, Hussein or Assad has turned his guns on Tel Aviv, seeking justice for the Palestinians has always been low on his list of priorities.

Indeed, the plight of the 400 Palestinian deportees in southern Lebanon is, in many respects, the result of years of Arab indifference to the Palestinian cause.

Had the Arabs been rather more diligent in pressing the cause, there would have been no need for the Palestinians to launch their own uprising, the intifada, five years ago.

And it was as a consequence of the failure of the established Palestinian leadership — Yasser Arafat and his cronies — to make sufficient capital out of the uprising that the grassroots turned increasingly to Hamas; the Palestinians' Islamic fundamentalist wing.

Hamas's success in reviving the intifada is ultimately the reason why the Palestinian deportees last week found themselves stranded.

And while, as has happened so much in the past, most Arab governments jumped at the opportunity to lament the Palestinians' plight and condemn Israel's lack of compassion, they have been less forthcoming about providing tangible help. Certainly, any marooned Palestinian even faintly aware of the plight of

Bosnian Muslims would have been under no illusions about how the rest of the Arab World would respond to their forced deportations.

Ever since the Serb armed forces concentrated their focus on Bosnia last summer, the great and the good in the Islamic World have shouted their indignation from the mosque-tops.

But, in terms of supplying practical support, they have fallen well short of their oft-proclaimed call to jihad, or holy war. Tangible support for the Bosnian Muslims has been confined to a rag-muffin group of volunteers who have been more a hindrance than a help to the militias fighting the Serbs.

In the new year, Islamic leaders, under the auspices of the Islamic Conference Organisation (ICO) have threatened to break the U.N. arms embargo, a gesture which does little to scare the Serbs and more to conceal the fact that the Islamic World has hardly lifted a finger to help the Bosnian Muslims.

Indeed, the inability of Islamic leaders to utter anything other than empty threats undermines the argument, which has been enthusiastically advanced in some quarters, that Islam constitutes the single greatest threat to western hegemony as the century approaches its end.

Leaders who are unable to help a few hundred Palestinians stranded in Southern Lebanon, or the tens of thousands of Bosnian Muslims, surrounded by maniacal Serbs, are hardly likely to summon either the courage or the resources to hammer at the gates of Vienna — Sunday Telegraph.

Will President Clinton be the same as candidate Clinton?

By Barry Schweid
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Would it be churlish to suggest even before he takes the oath that Bill Clinton the candidate and Bill Clinton the president-elect may not be the same man?

Consider: Mr. Clinton the candidate sang the praises of public schools. Mr. Clinton the president-elect is sending his daughter Chelsea to a private school that costs more than \$10,000.

Mr. Clinton the candidate left the strong impression, at least with Haitians, that they would have a far better chance of gaining asylum in the United States. He said he would change President Bush's policy of turning away all Haitian refugees.

Mr. Clinton the president-elect says he will allow refugees to petition for temporary political asylum, but not permit "mass emigration."

Mr. Clinton the candidate pledged to cut the federal deficit in half in four years. Mr. Clinton the president-elect appears to be backing off, blaming the Bush administration for camouflaging the magnitude of the deficit problem.

Promises are hard to keep, as Mr. Bush discovered with his promise not to raise taxes. He, too, had to confront the reality of understated revenues and over-

stated optimism. Fact is, no chief executive, especially in the modern era, has been immune from contradictions between campaign promise and presidential reality.

Dwight Eisenhower, revered to this day as an honest man, pledged if elected to go to Korea. He didn't say what he would do about the war when he got there. But just saying he would go had the desired effect of making the voters believe he had the right prescription.

Richard Nixon, whose track record was already questionable, said he had a secret plan to end the war in Vietnam. Undoubtedly, that helped him get elected. The war was tearing the country apart and it went on for four more years.

Jimmy Carter said he would withdraw American troops from South Korea. He won, and he didn't.

Ronald Reagan campaigned long and hard against the Panama Canal treaties, but observed them scrupulously as president. He promised to balance the budget, and both he and Mr. Bush campaigned for a constitutional amendment requiring that that be done. But neither man ever submitted anything close to a balanced budget.

Power and the press

THE LABOUR backbencher Clive Soley performed a public service when he established an informal committee of fellow members and called a series of public hearings in advance of the second reading of his Freedom and Responsibility of the Press Bill. The central feature of this is a statutory body appointed, directly or indirectly, by the home secretary. It would have the power to force newspapers to correct factual inaccuracies. A newspaper that ignored an instruction from the new authority would be liable to unlimited penalties for contempt if the High Court upheld the ruling.

The hearings indicated that Mr. Soley is proposing to use a clumsy and dangerous stick in an effort to crack a small, wizened nut. As Lord McGregor of Durris, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, told the committee: "Direct intervention by a statutory body carries great risks of censorship."

Moreover, the pseudo-legal tribunal would have all the weaknesses of a court of law and none of its advantages. Its powers would be so great that those called before it would, reasonably, demand legal representation and insist on due process being followed.

The authority's search for truth would often prove futile, but would provide endless scope for pressure groups. A reference to, say, the circumstances in which the state of Israel was founded and large numbers of Arabs abandoned their homes would

produce irresolvable complaints from Zionists and Palestinians. Yet in recent years newspapers have become far more willing to correct genuine errors of fact. Many (including the Independent) have appointed readers' representatives and given them freedom to investigate and adjudicate when reporters or editors do not automatically concede that they have made a mistake.

The issue that should concern MPs and the press is the complex question of privacy and the public interest. This is not always susceptible to legal intervention. For example, people are distressed when reporters pester the victims of grievous assaults or the relatives of those who have died or suffered injury in a disaster. Yet others are subjected to a form of siege by journalists camped outside their doors.

Next month Sir David Calcutt will deliver his second report on privacy. He could usefully start by addressing the extent to which the law has failed to keep up with technological advances that enable journalists — and anybody with the necessary equipment — to bug rooms and telephones, to pluck from the air conversations made on car phones or to snatch photographs from great distances. The activities of the electronic eavesdropper and the automated Peeping Tom should be severely restricted. But legislation controlling surreptitious surveillance should apply to everybody, not just journalists.

Members of the press should, however, be able to plead public interest in mitigation if brought before a court. It would then be for judge and jury to decide how much weight should be given to the claim. The leaking of information about the state of Nor-

man Lamont's Access account was an invasion of privacy. The leaked news that public money had been used to meet part of the costs incurred in removing a dubious tenant from a flat in his house was in the public interest — The Independent.

LETTERS

Keep up the good job

To the Editor:

I have been living in the United States for the last eleven years. Recently I came back to Jordan and decided to visit one of our neighbouring Arab countries.

I was pleasantly surprised, at the border, by the fact that the police and customs officers are well-organised and they treat travellers politely and respectfully.

This, along with other things, makes me proud of my country and of my being a Jordanian.

So I would like to full-heartedly thank the border people for doing a wonderful job and helping reflect Jordan's image as a country of good, professional, efficient people.

Angad M. Faram,
P.O. Box 1184,
Irbid.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Weekender

Lebanese-American writer takes women's, ethnic causes close to her heart

By Ica Wabbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter



Elmaz Abinader

AMMAN — "The customs officer recognises the Arab-, or Greek-, or Japanese-, but the Syrian woman, walking towards connecting flights, made no mistake. She had met an American on the plane."

This last paragraph of an article written by Elmaz Abinader, Lebanese-American writer, appeared in The New York Times under the headline "Here I am an Arab; there an American" as a result of an incident that happened to her at Heathrow airport. But contrary to what it might suggest, it is not an angry cry against obvious discrimination.

It is not, because in Ms. Abinader's writings she does not judge; rather, she lets the behaviour condemn itself. It is not, because the writer is not bitter against life's injustices; she only seems determined to correct them.

It is "the gap between my life and my heritage," says Ms. Abinader, now on a tour of the region that will take her to Saudi Arabia and Yemen, besides Jordan, at the invitation of the American Cultural Centre.

Her family's tradition of recording in writing the events of her lives goes back a long way. "Father writes, mother keeps daily journal." (Her father's diaries — he was a trader on the Amazon in the thirties — form the basis of a doctoral dissertation she wrote for the University of Nebraska).

This and Ms. Abinader's love for writing and for "the old story" (Lebanon) made it imperative for her to put pen on paper and produce poetry and prose.

"I am a poet of identity, of a concern, of a culture, of a story, and these influence the vision of the poetry. More generally, being an Arab-American poet is a political statement that suggests we are, none of us, only writers, but writers whose lives have been fashioned by histories and philosophies and who choose to bring the personal experience of this life into universal terms in the images we write."

This seems to be the personal philosophy of the young writer. But it is not her only tenet. With surprising precision, someone so widely read, with such an eclectic background and with such a cosmopolitan outlook, Ms. Abinader is quick to appropriate Reiner Maria Rilke's creed: It is not important to understand but to live the question rather than to find the answer.

And her book "The Children Of The Roojme, A Family Journey," published in New York in 1991, is an illustration of Ms. Abinader's beliefs.

As the title suggests, the book is an account of a family's struggles in the Middle East and in America. But, as Lebanese-American author Joseph Geha says in an article, the novel is "more than a chronicle of immigration; it also reimagines the plight of those left behind in Lebanon as they endured famine, war, plagues of locusts, epidemics and family rivalries. These last were over prestige, mostly, or money, or cats in the church — all fairly petty were they not occurring at the same time that the oppressive Turkish rulers played armies off against one another and dealt out violent punishments."

Roojme is a symbolic word; it means a stone terrace, explains the writer, formed of stones thrown in the process of building a house. "The terrace is an important place in our culture, a place where the family sits watching the night sky, stepping to the stories of loved ones."

The stories of her loved ones fed her childhood, says Ms. Abinader, reminding her, as a little girl, she would listen to her parents telling stories of "a romantic, mythical place for us, a place where fruit were bigger, water tastier, the mountains higher."

And the recorded stories of her family members are sources for her writings. She is a storyteller, just like them, but she

avows having had stronger motivations for writing: "I was in a society which did not accept me that easily. It was the gap between my two identities that pushed me to write."

Her works are fiction and non-fiction and her passion is a source of inspiration to many a student she teaches in her capacity as associate professor.

It does not come as a surprise that Ms. Abinader teaches creative writing, poetry, composition and ethnic literature, given her inherited talent for telling stories.

As for the ethnic literature breaking fresh ground, she says: "Society in the U.S. started accepting people from other cultures, and backgrounds."

A source of inspiration for those who want to express their own ethnicity, says the writer, is provided by the native Americans and the Afro-Americans.

"They come from a world of their own tradition, music, culture. They include that in their lives. Similarly, different aspects of the Arabic culture, of the inner music of its language, come out in my rhythm (of writing). Food, landscape, passion for my family and love for literature influence my writing."

The following stanza from the poem "The Burden of History" is illustrative of the impressions left on the writer and the way they shape her writing:

And here in the desert, Jupiter's columns rise
in the swirling air; the Syrian wind whines
through the
fragments

of doors and archways. And the story is told:
the trip over the mountains, the stones, the slaves,
the dying horses, in five languages. In the ceiling
are the faces of Cleopatra, Marc Antony, and Caesar,
turned away.
to Basilek, the Romans brought their temples,
their tombs, their long tables. And the pillars rise,
rise in the night, golden, like light, like everything
in the desert.

In the "Arabic music", the music of the poem is dictated not by some artificial rhythm, but by the writer's introducing the reader to the sounds of everyday life in a village:

Arabs sit making rababes. One is playing softly
sliding the bow across the horse hairs which are stretched
over a tight skin.

From a restaurant, I can hear an Arab in long black robes
beating coffee

...Behind me the men
invent songs about their day, laughing at the rhymes
they make. I hear a radio from a house and young chatter.
But soon it is quiet, and I start my own small song.

This sonic world is perfectly complemented by one of visual
images, olfactory and taste representations in the poem
"Global Darkness":

...The slats of my blinds
will open slightly and stripe my table
and the wooden bowl of marjoned peaches,
the ceramic jugs on the shelves, the mantle
cloth embroidered with oceans. My spine
will unfold in the light. I will know
it is morning by the cracking of the city bones.

If you blot out someone's sun, you must
send them lemons
they can cut slowly
into wedges
to squeeze with a cupped hand,
the juice will cradle into a bowl
of mashed eggplant.
You must gather jonquils, no other
flower will do. They will scoop the dust
from the cups to smear on their children's cheeks
when they play in the black dust
outside their houses.

Ms. Abinader's poems are anthologised. Now she is writing prose and dedicating part of her time to teaching her students to write. As for her plans for the future, "travelling all over the world" figures prominently, accompanied by the desire to "try to empower other ethnic writers and women to overcome discrimination. Women are not given that much attention; patriarchy is strong. And as long as they say 'woman writer they discriminate.'"

While avowing the desire to fight inequity and to erase "woman and ethnic" from near the word "writer", she also expresses pride in belonging to a different ancestry:

"Being an Arab-American poet is also a gift to my heritage, my only way of thanking my ancestors for my voice, my colour, my hair, my parents and siblings, and for the mountains and waters of Lebanon which stay in my memory."

Let's hope that Ms. Abinader will become a source of inspiration for some Jordanian students too.

Diary

Al Dustour newspaper, the second-largest circulation daily in the country, is suffering from the repercussions of an acute, yet hopefully temporary, case of schizophrenia over the controversial press and publications law. When debate over the legislation was started by the Lower House of Parliament, Al Dustour readily opened its pages to a number of journalists who challenged certain articles of the law as unfair and essentially undemocratic. While the other two Arabic dailies were slow to react to the law, Al Dustour helped create a lively debate and sometimes carried as many as three commentaries on the subject in one day. But, as all good things have to come to an end, the newspaper suddenly changed course and at least two of its top editors opted to go on record in defence of the draft law. The hidden hand of the minister of information, whose family owns majority shares of the Al Dustour parent company and practically runs it, were blamed for the volte-face. Despite the fact that the minister is known to have been initially opposed to quite a few articles of the law, he now appears to be going all-out in its favour. So much so in fact that he accused the Jordan Times, at a recent debate, of serving Israeli interests by vehemently attacking the law. This change of heart on the part of Mr. Sharif is easily understandable in light of the job he occupies, but for a veteran journalist like him to describe the new legislation as "progressive" and to accuse its opponents of serving Israeli interests is a bit too much, many observers and analysts say. "Mr. Sharif will probably sooner than later rejoin the journalists' ranks, but he is unlikely to be remembered as the minister-journalist who championed press freedoms and rights," a prominent journalist maintains. "A bad law is a bad law, even if its sponsors invoke national security in its defence."

Television viewers and newspaper readers will have easily noticed that Minister of Social Development Amin Mashagbeh was the target of an unprecedented heavy criticism by Muslim Brotherhood deputies during the budget debate in Parliament last week. The most fiery of his critics was the House's Finance Committee chairman and Tafleeb Deputy, Abdullah Akaleh, who accused Dr. Mashagbeh of "falsifying" the results of a study conducted by his ministry of the financial needs of different governorates in the Kingdom. Dr. Akaleh described the findings of the study as "misleading and vague." The true story about the Islamists' attack against the minister actually lies in the work, operation and management of the ministry's National Aid Fund, which is in charge of distributing financial assistance to the needy in the Kingdom. The fund now has as its head Mr. Farouq Badran, who is an Islamist. The Minister, being uncomfortable with the fact that Mr. Badran has the ultimate say on who gets assistance (and can in return expect votes and support from those whom he chooses to help) has been trying to curtail Badran's power, to the extent that he recommended to the Council of Ministers his outright removal. The Muslim Brotherhood naturally reacted strongly to the minister's attack and launched a two-pronged onslaught of its own. The first was, needless to repeat, the parliamentary criticism. The second, and the more important perhaps, is an alleged behind-the-scenes effort to keep Mr. Badran in his job. The speaker of Parliament (no less) quietly intervened with the Prime Minister to reverse the decision, and the effort worked. What was left for the overruled minister to do in the face of overwhelming political odds? One answer is to direct TV cameras to social hot-spots and shed light on what his ministry has been doing to solve festering socio-economic problems there? Apparently that is what he has opted to do.

Basil Jardaneh, it seems, is not the only person who is unhappy about his continuing to occupy the minister of finance job. He is now joined by some others who want him to leave that senior post. It is more or less common knowledge that Mr. Jardaneh, who has been minister since 1989, has repeatedly requested that he be allowed to leave the Cabinet and take control of the affairs of his own company, the Jordan Investment Bank. During last month, however, it became evident that a few others share his desire to quit, albeit for totally different reasons than his own. Al Aswaq weekly newspaper published an article in mid December under the title of "Minister of Finance...the private sector bates you." Shortly after that, the weekly Akhbar Al Usbou, which is owned by tycoon Isa Rimoni, who is also deputy from Jerash, declared itself also a Jardaneh "bater". The reasons: Mr. Jardaneh kicked out of his office the newspaper's editor-in-chief and an "Iraqi businessman" who had accompanied him on the visit. The weekly's report on the affair stated that Jardaneh was simply asked about the list of items that could be imported by Iraq without busting the embargo of course. "But the minister suddenly started raving and threatening" the story went on. Not a very convincing story perhaps, but one that nevertheless partly explains why the finance minister does not hold a high opinion of the Jordanian press.

The long band of the law has again intervened in a case involving deputies Laith Shbeilat and Yacoub Qarrash except that it is time to mend fences between them and not to fence them in. The bearers of bad news tell the Jordan Times that one day recently Sheikh Qarrash drove to Mr. Shbeilat's office for a friendly visit. Upon arrival he was met by a hostile group of employees who wanted him to "leave Mr. Shbeilat alone." The verbal argument between Mr. Qarrash and the employees escalated into a loud verbal encounter and ended with the Sheikh "being thrown out of the office." Deputy Shbeilat did not take part in the quarrel, the sources say. However, bruised and upset, Deputy Qarrash did not fail to utilise the event to his advantage and demanded that a "jaha" (tribal mediation group of well-known personalities) come to his house and ask for forgiveness. And that is precisely what happened, with Mr. Shbeilat joining in this time.

Lower House Deputy, Fakhri Kaware, who is also a columnist for Al Ra'i daily, is finally singing the swan song of his daily column. The decision to stop writing is not taken for lack of material to write about, he said in a farewell column Saturday, but because "a third of my columns are thrown out" by the editor. Mr. Kaware's column has been running (on and off) for years now. And while "Jordan has declared on all levels that democracy has become a way of life," he said, "the press continues to shackle its writers, place hurdles in the way of their words, and ban their opinion from seeing the sunlight." Mr. Mahmoud Al Kayed, the editor of Al Ra'i, was not asked to comment on the latest episode in the sometimes heated relations between him and Al Ra'i writers, but according to inside sources, the deputy constantly ruffles feathers at the newspaper by tending to invoke his Parliamentary immunity against his editors. "He does not check his facts thoroughly, and he likes to tackle taboo subjects," said one of the sources. "Besides, we have just received a letter from one Hamad Jaber, a Jordanian citizen, saying he will be happy to miss Fakhri Kaware's daily article. It is also said that Mr. Kaware's opposition to the press and publications law in Parliament discussions has been too lukewarm for the taste of his editors and fellow writers. By the way, the now-silent deputy has just been elected president of the Arab Writers Association, and that job alone should keep him busy."

Nermeen Murad

Syria's old cars never die, just soar in price

By Issam Hamza

AMMAN — Nader Kali told the car of his dreams hie hunting birds in a Syrian desert in 1988. It was a wreck.

In a country where cars never die Kali saw the parts, parts-shattered 1932 Ford Eight Special Saloon as a treasure — buried under more than four decades of undisturbed dust.

"It took me two years of arduous but pleasant work to store and repair the car," said Kali, accustomed to rigging jalopies back from the dead in his work as a spare-parts dealer.

Kali said his painstaking restoration work, aided by the wizardry of local mechanics as well as parts ordered at great cost from the United States, paid off in the end.

The four-cylinder Ford, believed to be Syria's oldest roadworthy car, "now has a market value of \$50,000," he said.

A government ban on car imports for individual buyers is a strong incentive to resurrect and maintain vintage vehicles.

The ban assures buyers of old cars a smart return on their investment even after more than a generation of rugged use.

In one case a man bought a Mercedes Saloon in 1954 for 10,000 Syrian pounds, or about \$2,600. He used it as a taxi for 25 years, then sold it for an eighteen-fold increase in value.

As a result of the price incentives cars are almost never scrapped. Mechanics return total wrecks to the road even after horrendous crashes.

Craftsmen turn out reproduction parts for cars whose parent companies went out of business half a century ago.

The restorations have spawned an incipient car culture in Syria, with enthusiasts organising the country's first

vintage auto shows and motor races.

Observers link the activities to an easing of official restrictions in the country, ruled for some 30 years by the hardline Socialist Baath Party.

Fashion shows and beauty contests have highlighted the trend, along with the appearance of luxury goods such as caviar and perfume, once strictly outlawed to stem the outflow of foreign currency.

Wael Hadaya, a member of the newly-established auto fanciers' "Steering Club," said the group hoped to organise an international Middle East car rally to revive the

Syrian-Lebanon-Jordan rallies of more than 20 years ago.

"I have a big interest in cars," said Hadaya, a wealthy businessman.

"I took part in a racing event at the peace and love festival in Latakia in 1991 before the establishment of this club."

He said he won the race in a BMW, but now "I'm looking for an old Mercedes or a Jaguar."

Diplomats say the incentives for restoring old cars may diminish when the government implements an expected easing of import rules and newer cars become avail-

able.

In the meantime, Kali zealously guards his born-again Ford, driving it only at night when streets are emptied of cars.

He has another car for everyday use, a spunky Pontiac Roadmaster convertible only 45 years old.

He said he bought it from a Damascus man who claimed it was once owned "by the famed Arab female singer Asmahan."

Kali said he plans to save the Ford to use during his wedding.

"After my wedding I might consider lending it to my friends," he said.

Kuwaiti ice rink makes few concessions to tradition

By Jonathan Wright
Reuters

KUWAIT — "No skating in shushas" says a notice on a door, banning the long white robes that are the everyday dress of Kuwaiti men.

"It's very difficult to skate in a shusha," explained Abdul Wahab Al Bannay, manager of Kuwait's ice skating rink. "And it doesn't look good. It's not the image we want to present."

With loudspeakers blaring music by M.C. Hammer and a video games arcade in the cafeteria, the rink is indeed a piece of modernity and to reconcile with the traditions of a country where it was once something you read about in travel books.

But forty years of wealth have changed Kuwaitis and after school Wednesday the rink is crowded with teenagers, girls and boys together, vying to show off their skating skills.

In summer the temperature outside might be over 50 degrees Celsius (120 Fahrenheit) but inside the vast Olympic-size hall it is a constant 15 degrees (59 Fahrenheit) and 33 miles (53 km) of underground piping keeps the ice frozen.

Mr. Bannay said it cost the state-owned Touristic Enterprises Company up to 30,000 dinars (\$100,000) a year in electricity to keep the climate at bay, far more than in temperate countries.

But with about 440 customers on an average day, the

rink is making a profit. If it did not, the state would probably cover the losses to keep the young off the streets and out of trouble.

For the rink is one of the few places in the city where boys and girls can mix in public away from their elders — a practice which the management seems to encourage.

"This is a very modern place. We don't want to say 'this is forbidden, this is forbidden'," said Mr. Bannay.

The rink even gives girls a 30 per cent discount on season tickets to try to even out the numbers. "We get more boys than girls, which is not very surprising. In the old days girls didn't come out of their houses," said one of the staff.

One concession to

Kuwait's Islamic background is a smaller separate rink for women who prefer not to skate in front of the menfolk. They come wrapped in black, their heads in scarves, and change into tracksuits in a room at the back.

But Luba Birselyova, a Czechoslovak who instructs women and children, said the girls shunned ladylike figure skating in favour of hockey skating, faster and more exhilarating.

"As soon as they can skate they buy the hockey skates. They want to be fast," she said.

Mr. Bannay said some Muslim clerics had once objected to the rink but had not pressed the point.

"They didn't like us because of the loud music but

we haven't changed," he said. "Without the music it would be deadly. You can't skate without music."

The music can be a little daring. "I love the way you touch my body" went the lyrics of one song. "The pants stay on" was the refrain of a funk number by a woman singer.

Rashed Al Najada, disc jockey and a regular skater almost since the rink opened in 1980, said the only complaint he ever had was that the music was not right for dancing.

When it opened it was the only rink in the Arabian peninsula and probably in the whole Middle East. Others have since opened in Saudi Arabia and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

But the Kuwaitis, who like to be first in everything, are dismissive of their new rivals. "They're complete beginners. They've only been skating for a year and a half," said Walid Al Gharib of the Kuwaiti ice hockey team.

Gharib is preparing for a match in Dubai, the team's first abroad since the rink reopened in June last year. The rink closed on Aug. 2, 1990, the day of the Iraqi invasion, and after liberation in February 1991 it took three months to do repairs and clear up the mess.

A contingent of Iraqi soldiers had camped at the entrance and in September 1990 a mysterious fire broke out in the basement, leaving soot all over the walls.

Instant knowledge

By Jean-Claude Elias

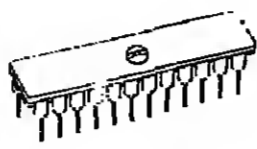
The Personal Computers — PCs — with their virtually limitless possibilities, often give their users an euphoric feeling of power and polyvalence. Power because PCs can easily store and process enormous amounts of data and at very high speed, polyvalence because of the many different types of tasks one can perform on a computer.

From word processing to data bases, spreadsheets to engineering, drawing to music, management to real-time machines control, communications to games, the programmes available to the user of modern PCs cover an amazingly wide and diversified range. And because of the relatively low cost of these programmes — software — one is understandably tempted to get most of them.

However getting a programme to draw architectural sketches won't make an architect out of a layman, at least not overnight. It's surprising how people with a reasonable dose of intelligence and common sense, lose touch with reality and logic when it comes to computers, as if caught by a spell. Ask them if a pen and a few sheets of paper will make anyone an Ernest Hemingway, and you will certainly get a negative reply. But they will probably believe that a PC with a nice drawing software will get them closer to Leonardo Da Vinci. Where did common sense go?

I have experimented with practically all types of software, only to find that specialised programmes are designed for specialised people. Try to use AutoCad, an engineering drawing package, without understanding the basics of technical drawing and you will get nowhere. Or a MIDI — Music Instrument Digital Interface — programme, without being able to play a single piece of music. Naturally one can always go through the demonstrations and pre-stored drawings or music pieces that every smart

chip talk



software developer integrates into their work in order to promote it, and you will have the very pleasant but how deceptive feeling of having achieved something.

Computer dealers in Jordan often have to argue with their clients who want "...every software that can go on the hard disk..." especially if the said software is pirated and costs nothing. One of the advantages of using original software that you pay for, is precisely the fact that you think twice before buying it and therefore get only what you really need or think you can effectively use.

Instant knowledge does not exist, neither at college nor with computers. If learning through PCs can be more fun and motivating than with traditional books at school or university, the process is nevertheless similar and requires a lot of work. There is absolutely nothing wrong in acquiring a PC with a drawing software for someone who is not an artist, provided he or she realises that there is a learning process to go through, and that this process requires as much work and creativity as a more traditional method. Like a pen, a paintbrush, a pocket calculator or a guitar, the PC is just another tool.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Thursday, Jan. 14

1784 — United States ratifies peace treaty with England, formally ending American war of independence.

1907 — Earthquake in Jamaica destroys Kingston and takes 1,000 lives.

1942 — Forces under U.S. general Douglas MacArthur resist Japanese attacks on Batavia in Philippines in World War II.

1962 — At least 36 Algerians and Europeans are killed in disorders and terrorist attacks in Algeria's major cities.

1983 — Ten Palestinians detained in Jerusalem in apparent clampdown on Arab activists.

1990 — Azerbaijani attacks on Armenians leave hundreds dead in Baku, Soviet Union.

1992 — Israel opens peace talks with Jordan and resumes bargaining with Palestinians.

Friday, Jan. 15

1535 — King Henry VIII assumes title of "supreme head of the church" in England.

1877 — Austria agrees to remain neutral in event of Russo-Turkish war.

1932 — France completes pacification of French Morocco.

1943 — Japanese forces are driven from Guadalcanal island in Pacific in World War II.

1966 — Death count surpasses 400 as flood refugees begin returning to hillside homes in Brazil's capital of Rio de Janeiro.

1973 — Pope Paul VI tells Israel's Prime Minister Golda Meir at Vatican he supports an international Jerusalem.

1986 — Communist Party chief Mikhail S. Gorbachev proposes plan for "ridding the Earth of nuclear weapons within 15 years."

1989 — Riot police in Prague, Czechoslovakia, use water cannon and dogs to disperse at least 2,000 people who defy ban on independent rallies.

1991 — U.N. deadline for withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait passes without incident, as efforts by French and others to resolve crisis diplomatically fail.

1992 — EC recognises Slovenia and Croatia as independent states.

Saturday, Jan. 16

1666 — France, allied with Holland, declares war on England.

1964 — Austria and Prussia send ultimatum to Denmark for repeal of constitution calling for incorporation of Schleswig.

1969 — Soviet cosmonauts achieve first linkup of two manned spaceships while in orbit around Earth.

1973 — United States and South Vietnam declare ceasefire in Vietnam war in hopes of full peace pact.

1979 — Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi flees Iran after new civilian government is approved in parliament.

1991 — U.S. and U.N. allies launch airstrike against targets in Iraq and Kuwait nineteen hours after U.N. deadline passes at 12:00 midnight, EST, using fighters

and heavy bombers; attack is deemed successful by U.S. and undetermined military and industrial targets are reported destroyed.

1992 — Two PLO leaders are shot.

Sunday, Jan. 17

1759 — Holy Roman empire declares war on Prussia.

1852 — Sand River convention establishes South African Republic of Transvaal.

1959 — Federal state of Mali is formed by union of republics of Senegal and French Sudan.

1990 — Medellin Cartel says it has lost drug war and offers skeptical U.S. and Colombian authorities an end of terror in exchange for pardon.

1991 — Second and third airstrikes against targets in Iraq and Kuwait are launched; at least six Iraqi Scud missiles are launched at Tel Aviv, Israel, and three explode in that city; White House calls on Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait in exchange for end to hostilities.

1992 — Israel began enforcing a sweeping curfew on Palestinians from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip.

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Monday, Jan. 18

1701 — Brandenburg's Frederick III is crowned Frederick I, King of Prussia.

1913 — Greek and Turkish naval forces battle off Tenedos Isle.

1918 — Russian constitutional assembly opens in Petrograd.

1952 — Anti-British riots break out in Egypt.

1963 — Government of Charles de Gaulle in France insists that Britain be barred from European Common Market.

1986 — Fierce fighting in South Yemen's capital city of Aden interrupts evacuation of foreigners.

1986 — Fierce fighting in South Yemen's capital city of Aden interrupts evacuation of foreigners.

Wednesday Jan. 20

1262 — England's parliament meets for first time.

1925 — Soviet Union and Japan form alliance; Britain and China sign treaty of Peking.

1958 — Soviet Union threatens Greece with economic sanctions if it agrees to the installation of NATO missile bases on Greek territory.

1968 — President Aref's regime in Iraq is deposed, and new government is formed under Al Bakr.

1989 — George Bush becomes the 41st president of the United States.

1990 — Soviet troops storm Azerbaijani capital of Baku, leaving dozens dead and wounded, as President Mikhail Gorbachev defends action on national television.

1991 — In Moscow, hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens protest bloody crackdown on Lithuania and demand resignation of Gorbachev.

By The Associated Press

Gloom buster

By E. Yaghi

When you're down and feeling blue,
When you're sad and don't know what to do...
Who do you call? The Gloom Buster!

Everybody loves the Laugh Man for he's a gloom buster. He shoots laughter from his penetrating laser like Tinkle Bells sprinkles magic. He lives in a mystic land of Nod on top of the Big Rock Candy Mountain where chocolate bars are stacked to the stars and you stand right there a-counthin'. He hates gloom and depression and most of all, tears. His enemies are frowns and ill intentions that tend to flourish in the minds of many. He listens attentively for his sensitive beeper which he keeps pinned to his shirt to bleep a signal of someone in distress who suffers from a bout of gloom. As soon as he is notified of such a case, he zooms away from his mountain abode in his golden chariot drawn by two white unicorns and rushes to the scene of the latest crime of not smiling.

The only fee the Laugh Man charges is a smile or at least a downpayment of a willingness to participate in such an effort. So, his services are free and his reward is to see happiness replace the folds of fret. He catches his laughter from Dream River where men who sail down this emerald passageway can be whatever they want, and from falling stars which he gathers pieces of and puts... in his pocket for a rainy day.

Last week was a routine one for the Laugh Man. First, he heard a baby crying. He flew to the scene and there, was a tiny tot who had just had his candy stolen from him. Whoever said "like stealing candy from a baby," over-exaggerated, for the Laugh Man knows how much a baby howls when something he likes is taken away. Immediately, the Laugh Man placed a red and white sugar cane in the baby's small chubby hand and with a zip of his laser, erased the tears that had stained the cheeks of the little victim and replaced them with a glowing smile and the happy ring of baby laughter.

Next, he visited a student who was worried about passing an exam. He approached the youth who had his head sunk in his hands as he sat beneath the shade of an eucalyptus tree and asked, "What's wrong, son?"

The boy inquisitively looked up at the smiling Laugh Man and replied, "I'm so afraid I'm not going to pass my exams! What will I ever do if I fail?"

"Why you'll simply try harder next time, my friend. It's not as if your passing or failing is the end of the world!" And he beamed his sleight of hand in a swirl of pink and left the young scholar with a happy smile and a seed of hope in his heart. Then he visited a sad writer who stared gloomily out of his office window with a tear trickling down his literary face. "Pray tell me, what's wrong with you, Sir Author?"

Author spun around on his heels and replied with a sulky scowl, "Oh, woe is me! The grief in my heart spins itself into sorrowful tales. What can I do?"

"Well, you know something, Mr. Author? You're stories really are sad, even your explanations for their sadness are sad," and before he could even zap joy on the writer, they both broke out in a roar of laughter. He left the literary man with tears running down his face. However, they weren't tears of unhappiness, but caused by a fit of mirth. And when he heard of an old widow woman moaning because she had had so many children that she had not known what to do and now was all alone and no one to care for her, he appeared right beside her and spoke in a loud voice so she could hear, "Dear lady, why do you groan so?"

He noticed her hands were worn from knitting and cooking and cleaning and washing for her so many children and her face was knotted in creases of worry. "I have no one to share my lonely moments with! My children are all gone and grown and now when they don't need me, they forget that I exist. It will be a good thing if they come for my funeral. This is what I get for all my hard work and sacrifice to raise them the best way I knew how!"

"There, there now!" the Laugh Man coaxed. A look of concern replaced his usual happy countenance and he said out loud, "I'll just have to see these ungrateful offsprings for myself!"

He zoomed off in his chariot of gold without even remembering to flash laughter around the elderly one and went to each of her children where he said to them one by one, "Shame on you! Did you forget all the work your old mother did for you? Go at once and love and take care of her!"

Before he left, he made sure to witness the scene of all her brood converging on her and the largest smile he ever saw replaced all the lines of worry that had been on her face.

On the way home, he stopped off at the hospital for minor repairs, for even the Laugh Man needs medical attention once in a while. The doctor told him in a stern voice but ending with a kindly smile, "You've been neglecting yourself again. You work too hard spreading happiness. You must rest here for a few days!"

So, the Laugh Man spent a few calm and peaceful days in the hospital and before he left in complete healthy recovery, he had every nurse, doctor and even janitors going around with big grins on their faces and were confronted with an epidemic of contagious laughter.

Everybody loves the Laugh Man. He is a welcome guest, that visits too seldom but he is right there dwelling in the hearts of all good folk in the world, they just have to look for him. Remember, if you're blue and don't know what to do, just call. The Gloom Buster!"

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday Jan. 14

8:30 Uncle Buck

9:10 The Human Factor

Hear No Evil

A famous surgeon tries to place blame on one of the students but eventually accepts it himself.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Movie Of The Week

The Guys

Starring: James Woods

Smoking can cause terminal cancer to non-smokers — this is the story of Walter Palmer.

Friday Jan. 15

8:30 Coach

Big Brother, Little Brain

Dober plays big brother to Charlie, an eight year old kid, but Charlie is a lot of trouble and wants Dober to marry his mother and become his dad.

9:10 E.N.G.

Victims

Channel 10 News exposes a situation of police racism.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Columbo

The Murder Of A Rock Star

How and why did Mr. Cryton kill his lover Miss Nancy? This is the mystery Columbo will reveal this week!

Saturday Jan. 16

8:30 America's Funniest Home Videos

9:00 Perspective

9:30 Varieties

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film

The Return Of Sam McCloud



(Left to right) Jack Ellis, Andrew Tiernan, Craig Fairbrass, Richard Hawley, Helen Mirren, Ian Fitzgibbon, and Philip Wright star in Prime Suspect, Tuesday at 10:20

Starring: Dennis Weaver

McCloud, the U.S. senator, goes to London to investigate the murder of his niece.

9:10 E.N.G.

Victims

Channel 10 News exposes a situation of police racism.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Columbo

The Murder Of A Rock Star

How and why did Mr. Cryton kill his lover Miss Nancy? This is the mystery Columbo will reveal this week!

10:00 News In English

10:20 Vietnam

In 1964 Australia decided to join the Americans in the war against communism in Vietnam.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Prime Suspect

Jane Tennison gets a confession but is not convinced, and Bob Oswald arrests a young black suspect who commits suicide in his cell.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Echoes In The Darkness

10:00 News In English

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10:20 Echoes In The Darkness

The lonely stranger

By Roufan Nahhas

Special to the Jordan Times

A man living in the streets of Amman carries lottery tickets in one hand and a walking stick in the other. He roams with no destination in mind, stopping at every corner to gaze at the cars passing by, looking deeply inside your eyes wondering if you will notice his existence, stop for a moment and ask for your ticket to untold wealth.

His name is Khaled and he was pushed onto the streets after an accident at his place of work prevented him from working anywhere except perhaps on the streets as a lottery ticket vendor.

"No one wants me to work for him because I look like this," he said, showing me his half-leg which brought to my mind scenes from a war movie.

"I am doing fine now and maybe I will have the chance to win the big prize," he said with a smile, asking me if I wanted to buy a ticket.

I stopped, amazed for a moment, and unconsciously (unaware of my movements) opened my wallet, took the last two dinars and gave them to him. He gave me the lottery ticket saying "insha'allah terbah" (God willing you'll win).

For a second I thought this conversation was about to end, but I managed to draw his attention back to me by asking about his family. He looked at me with surprise. Putting the tickets down, he bent his small body and relaxed on the pavement. I sat next to him wondering what things he will say to a complete stranger. He started

speaking in a low voice about how his elder son, who works at a company, brings his friends to the house without permission from the father. Even his little girl, who is still at school, never listens to him.

For a moment I wanted to stand up and leave behind this man's sufferings, but I could not. I thought he needed someone to talk to.

He went on talking about the unsolved problems he faced with his wife, who also happens to be his cousin and who evidently demands a lot of things. He said his wife began her day by cursing her parents for forcing her to marry him. There was sadness and deep unhappiness in his litany of family problems. He said he hated to go home to relax simply because it is never easy to relax in a two-room house with seven children shouting and his wife constantly yelling back at them.

"I live here and I am not ashamed of that. In fact I have a lot of friends and I do not need a family," he said. I kept listening while he seemed never to be able to stop. His pride and dignity made him repeat "I don't need anyone" over and over.

I stood up trying to find the appropriate words to help alleviate his pain. But the only words I could come up with were the dry, commonplace: Don't worry, man. Everyone has their problems. Things will change for the better, insha'allah.

A car stopped beside us and without a word Khaled stood up with dignity and, using his walking cane, moved towards the car hoping to sell his lottery tickets.

مكتبة الامم

Heir to Muppets' empire maintains legacy

By Robert Shelton
LONDON — Brian Henson, 29-year-old president and chief executive officer of the production company that makes the world merrier with its charming puppets called The Muppets, sees his team as "an extended family." But the son of the late company

founder Jim Henson is also aware that he's the head of an international empire — with studios for TV and film production in London, New York and Los Angeles.

"We were the first TV producers to be able to claim our work has been seen in more than 100 countries,"

Henson said. The Muppets, from Kermit the Frog to Miss Piggy, he explained, "are timeless, eccentric and not trendy. They can appeal to millions in different cultures." Henson, who has an open, cheerful face for an international tycoon, makes it clear that he dearly wishes he were not in his present job — not that he doesn't enjoy it. He acceded to the Muppets throne at the untimely death of his father two and a half years ago. "He'd been working very hard, as usual," Henson said. "He came down with the flu and died in a day. He was only 53, and it was a tremendous shock for all of us."

Thirty-five years ago Jim Henson pioneered his spectacular menagerie of creatures and unique brand of technical wizardry that has delighted children and adults on the world's TV and cinema screens. Brian Henson first got involved in the company in 1981, when he was 17, during a summer break from boarding school, and worked on the feature film "The Great Muppet Caper."

At 20, he joined the company full-time, performing marionettes and handling puppeteering and directing. He led a team of puppeteers who performed Hoggle in the feature film "Labyrinth" in 1986. Later that year, he was co-supervisor of the crew of 40 performers required to manipulate Audrey II, a giant, man-eating star of the film "Little Shop Of Horrors."

Henson's other credits in-

clude puppeteering in "The Muppets Take Manhattan" (1984), Disney's "Return To Oz" and "Santa Claus: The Movie" (both in 1985). In 1990, he was puppeteer coordinator in the Jim Henson/Nic Roeg film "The Witches." And the widely seen film "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (1991) had Henson as chief puppeteer and second unit director. Along with these feature films, TV also kept him busy. He performed in the Emmy award-winning "Storyteller" series and its sequel, "Greek Myths." He got another Emmy for outstanding direction of a children's programme for the "Mother Goose Stories" and is currently co-executive producer of the Dinosaurs TV series.

"Everyone thinks that because the Muppet puppets are so direct and uncomplicated that putting together a Muppet show is easy," Henson said. "If they could only know what goes on behind the screen, or under the screen, to get things coordinated, correctly timed. I suppose it's got to do with the art of concealing art, as the old saying goes."

The young production executive likens the Muppets to a family, with most of the Henson clan deeply involved in the father's legacy. Brian's brother John has done "some puppeteering." His eldest sister Lisa was, until recently, a senior vice president of production at the Warner Brothers film/TV studios. His sister Cheryl is a vice president of Henson productions.

American by parentage,

Henson married a Scots-woman, Ellis Flyte. "We've lived in London for the last eight years, but now I frequently visit our New York and Los Angeles studios. I don't have too much to do with the Los Angeles scene of smart parties, and I don't particularly feel at home with the cigar-smoking producers and businessmen of Hollywood. There is always business to be done, but I frankly prefer the creative side of things," he said with candor.

Of particular pride to him are the fine reviews and good box office enjoyed by the recent release of the "Muppet Christmas Carol," based on Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." This is the first Henson feature film in eight years and Henson's first as top producer and director. "Working with Michael Caine and the puppets was a great pleasure. He is such an excellent actor, and all those closeups of him as Scrooge are great because of the subtlety of his acting," Henson explained.

A sign at the Henson studios in a former post office in Hampstead, North London, neatly sums up the approach of the Muppet team: "Adults at Play." Down in Camden Town, there's another studio — called Jim Henson's Creature Shop — where much of the elaborate costuming, sets and background fixtures are designed and made.

"Christmas Carol" is the first time in Muppet history that the puppets worked on a story not specially written for them. "We liked the idea of accepting the Muppets as



A scene from "The Muppet Christmas Carol"

celebrities," Henson explained. "We chose Dickens because it's a classic story, but also liked the idea of mixing the irreverent wit of the Muppets with the somewhat dark world of Dickens. It's a story of redemption, of the miser Scrooge, but there is also room for fun amid some of the scary ghost tales. I think the Muppets' comedy works so well in a dramatic story," he added. Critics and audiences are showing they agree.

With so much on Henson's agenda, you wonder how he can keep track of it all. Muppet sequences for the 23-year-old Sesame Street television series will, of course,

continue. The Dinosaurs series will continue to be made in London and, in a few months, "Dog City," a new Muppet TV series, will start. Henson is particularly excited about plans to convert the fairy tale-oriented musical "Into The Woods" by Stephen Sondheim into a live-action movie. And the original "Pinocchio" story is soon to go into production, in association with famed Hollywood filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola. "He was planning 'Pinocchio,' and so were we," Henson explained. "We decided to work together rather than compete with the same story."

The Muppet team is quick to refer always to "the legacy of Jim," but are in high morale with his eldest son. Jim Nelson, a puppeteer, commented, "Brian certainly has his dad's ability and insight, and he has his own vision as well. We all want to work in a way that would have pleased Jim. Brian above all."

"We all wanted to make sure we could continue my dad's legacy," the new Muppet master added. "We're all here now to prove to ourselves and the world that we can — and that Jim Henson's magic lives on." — World News Link.

From Germany to Grenada, Elvis stamps rock around the world

By Charles J. Gans
The Associated Press
NEW YORK — Young Elvis the rockabilly, old Elvis the lounge-lizard, patriotic Elvis in an army uniform fans can find almost any portrait of "the king" they like on Elvis Presley from around the world.

The U.S. postal service, whose 29-cent Presley commemorative stamp went on sale Friday, is a relative late-comer in the race to cash in on Elvis' likeness.

At least 13 countries and territories have put Elvis on their stamps, ranging from West Germany to tiny Caribbean islands.

Their postal services weren't constrained by the U.S. requirement of waiting at least 10 years after a person's death to issue a stamp. Some countries don't even wait for a celebrity to die. Last year, the Caribbean island nation of St. Vincent put out a nine stamps of Madonna in various poses.

"I guess the United States has come around to seeing what other countries have already found out — that there is a great profit to be made by putting popular people like Elvis on a stamp."

says Fred Baumann, staff writer for the weekly Limb's Stamp News of Sidney, Ohio.

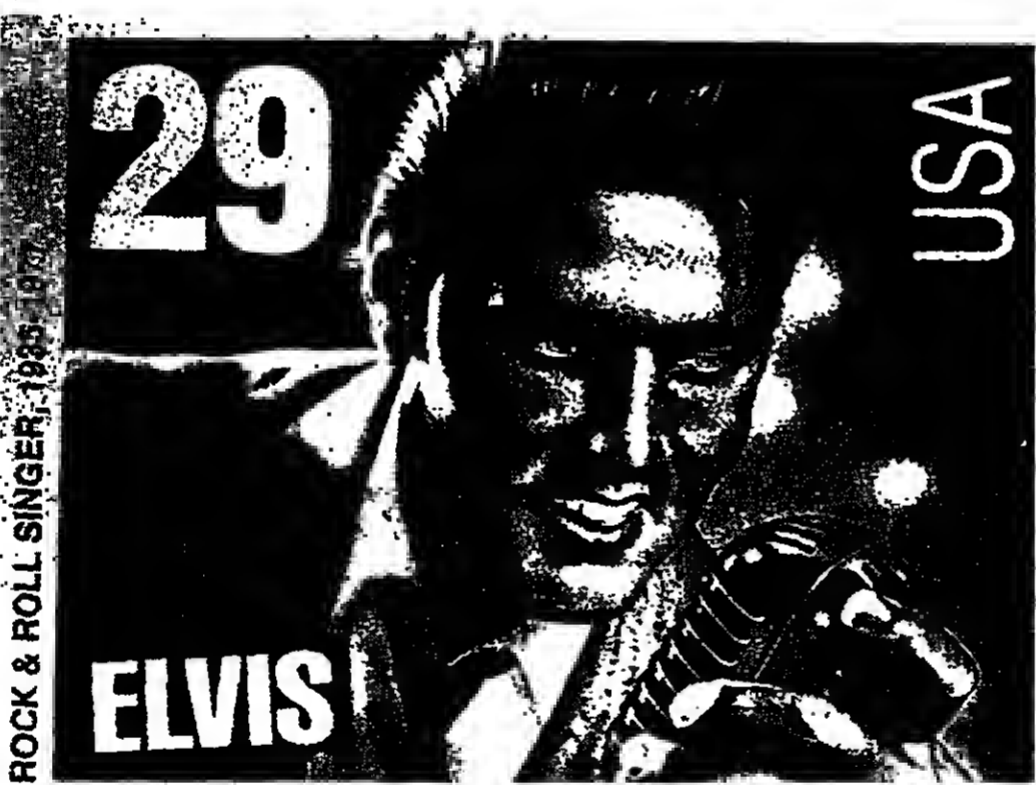
The U.S. Postal Service has printed 500 million Elvis stamps, and expects to make more than 20 million on the stamp and related souvenirs.

Other countries usually issue Elvis stamps in the tens of thousands. But for a small country such as St. Vincent, Elvis stamps can make a significant contribution to the state treasury.

The New York-based Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corp. assists foreign postal services in marketing stamps designed to appeal to fans or topical collectors.

A company spokesman, Daniel Keren, said countries can make anywhere from \$50,000 to \$500,000 from a single Elvis issue. In 1992, the firm distributed Elvis stamps from Tanzania, Gambia, St. Vincent, Antigua and Palau, a U.S. trust territory in the Pacific.

At New York's Cambridge-Exeter Stamp Co., eight dollars will buy Tanzania's set of nine Elvis stamps and a souvenir sheet. The East African nation didn't worry about whether to put the young or the old Elvis on



The winning stamp design of the Elvis Presley commemorative stamp that went on sale in the U.S. this week

its stamps — they showed Elvis in all the stages of his career — as a young rocker with a pompadour, a clean-cut soldier and puffy-faced

Las Vegas showman. "Entertainment is a big field right now in stamps," said company president Richard Ellis. "Elvis stamps

sell very well." The first attempt to issue an Elvis stamp — as in the United States — was controversial.

In 1978, just a year after "the king's" death, a private firm working with Grenada printed a stamp with a youthful Elvis framed in a guitar, but the government of the Caribbean island nation repudiated the stamp and it was never valid as postage, said Baumann. Grenada issued an Elvis stamp last year.

The first legitimate Elvis stamps — eight stamps and a souvenir sheet — were issued by St. Vincent in 1985.

In 1988, West Germany issued a stamp with the older Elvis — in a gold-and-blue Las Vegas costume — in a series on rock stars with John Lennon, Jim Morrison and Buddy Holly. Part of the proceeds went to pay for youth projects.

Other countries that have issued Elvis stamps include Guinea, the Central African Republic, Dominica, Malagasy, Comoros and Congo, according to Baumann.

Baumann cautions that so many Elvis stamps have been issued that they don't make particularly good investments. "They're good as keepsakes," he said. "If Elvis has a warm place in your heart, you'll enjoy having his face on a stamp."

Tokyo grooms home-grown designers

By Yoko Kobayashi
Reuters

TOKYO — Struggling young fashion designers are being offered a superb deal — they provide the designs and a group of city businesses lay on everything else they need to stage a top-class fashion show.

The aim is to nurture young designers who have lots of ideas but not enough money by providing the stage they need to show off their talent, and promote Tokyo as a fashion capital at the same time.

"Someone had to take on the role of an incubator," said Nobuyuki Ota, chairman of Tokyo's Council of Fashion Designers (CFD). "We told young designers to bring in their clothes and stage directors and we'd take care of the rest."

CFD held its first such show, called "Tokyo Collection Annex" last month. It was sponsored by Toyota, Tobu Stores and Ikebukuro Terminal Building.

Most up-and-coming designers are products of the 1980s designer fashion boom, signed up by apparel manufacturers to come up with designer brands.

But with many of the manufacturers unable to establish their brand names, most projects ended in failure, leaving young designers with little training and only cancelled contracts.

"Japanese firms invest all at once, then suddenly withdraw," Mr. Ota said. "But in the U.S. they do it gradually and, if it succeeds, then they really invest."

These setbacks forced the young designers to set up their own offices in Tokyo's fashion district and hold their own shows, which became increasingly expensive as the city's office rents soared.

But Mr. Ota recognises that young talent has to be nurtured if Tokyo is to become a fashion centre.

"The rise of new designers is essential to revitalise any fashion capital. They will be

the primary factor for bringing change," he said.

The highlight of the Tokyo Collection Annex was a joint show featuring work from five up-and-coming designers in front of 400 people at a major department store.

A Cuban hand set the mood with upbeat Latin music before Norihisa Ota, who went independent only this year, kicked off the show. He is no relation to Mr. Ota of CFD.

Black and red combinations twirled on stage, including a straight black knit dress, accented by red gloves and red turtleneck collar.

Yuji Yamada, five years an independent, came next. He dressed his models in long jackets of soft green and grey over dresses with slits at the back.

Milan-based Kenichi Ogawa was third. His models' blouses were made of knitted red polyester strips inlaid with silver dots. Worn with a white knit skirt and long cardigan.

Takashi Ohno, who went independent this year, was next.

His models wore white "mop" wigs and beige see-through jackets cut to below the knee and accented with black-and-white stitching around the collar.

Kyoko Higa, independent since 1990, finished the show. The models were decked in red, yellow, orange, purple, green and blue fabrics, with a sun motif on the upper half and trotting horses and green cactuses on the bottom half.

The jacket featured soft pink frills and four pink and white rose designs.

CFD plans to stage more shows for other young designers and hopes to propel Tokyo into the first division of fashion capitals, along with New York, Milan and Paris, where some Japanese designers are already based.

The first Tokyo collection, featuring Japan's top designers, was held in 1985. The CFD show could become another landmark in Japan's fashion ambitions.

Moscow's rock-opera 'Hamlet' reflects crisis of change

By James Flannery
Reuters

MOSCOW — An apocalyptic vision of Russia as a brutal Fascist wasteland is stunning Moscow audiences at a heavy-metal version of the classic tragedy "Hamlet."

Bewildered traditionalists walk out as a deafening rock show adds far more sex, sorcery and sadism than William Shakespeare imagined at Denmark's corrupt court.

Most spectators are too numb to applaud at the end of a no-interval, three-hour orgy of relentless music and political parable, enacted by zombie-like survivors of disaster.

"Death, death, death," scream witches who seem to have wandered in from "Macbeth."

The show drastically rearranges but retains the basic plot: troubled Hamlet seeks to avenge the murder of his father, the king, by a usurping uncle who has swiftly

married the young prince's mother.

"Who made this farrago?" shouted an angry customer at the end of a preview in a studio at the Moscow Arts Theatre, custodian of conventional stage classics.

"All the words are Shakespeare's," replied controversial creator-director Sergei Kurginyan.

Cut and reedited, this "Hamlet" has the genesis of a rock opera with international appeal, but a huge commercial success is not Kurginyan's first aim. He wants to punch home a didactic warning to people here in the transition from Communism.

"It's more a phenomenon than theatre," he says.

He is not an angry young man. Middle-aged and wear-

ing a grey, three-piece business suit, he looks more like a bank manager than a radical critic of Russian society.

His tumultuous version of "Hamlet" is the expression of a conservative intellectual troubled by the uncharted path of pro-democracy market reform.

The backdrop is a huge tattered and holed cloth the shape of Russia's map. Moscow appears to have been destroyed. The time is the indefinite future, after a catastrophe.

The stage is littered with animal skulls and witchcraft implements of shamanists, the sorcerer-priests who lead Siberian tribes in animist rituals for the spirits of the forest.

A revolution has occurred,

a ruler is overthrown. Crowds topple his statue, Russian style, as when the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution succeeded and the 1991 Kremlin coup failed.

A primitive state descends further into barbarism.

The play closes as in Shakespeare's version with the stage littered in corpses — but with none of the original's resolution. The audience is left with a sense of a darkness without end.

Whatever its artistic merits, "Hamlet" reflects current dismay among many intellectuals, for centuries a pampered elite, now neglected.

Western pragmatism troubles them. They see no ideology or structure in reforms.

clamped uneasily, as they see it, on a country unsuited to them by its nature and history.

They fear a loss of "Russianness." Keeping a sense of a unique national spirit and identity matters to Russians, a deeply patriotic people.

"The free-market economy is a myth," said Kurginyan in an interview after the final night of the show's pre-opening run.

Russia, he said, could only switch to "an Asian type of economy," but this transition would "bring Fascism and nothing else."

He said Japan, the world's second richest state, was not a model for it contained monolithic companies and a virtual power monopoly

Ghana adds vitamin A to reduce child deaths

By Hannah Tapang

BOLGATANGA, Ghana: Handing out vitamin A capsules is a temptingly convenient way of attempting to tackle a major worldwide deficiency — but improving diets may be a better long-term response.

A three-year trial in a dry Savannah region of Ghana concluded that providing vitamin A supplements reduced child deaths, because deficiency increases vulnerability to the consequences of diseases such as measles and diarrhoea.

Commented director Dr. David Ross: "Supplementation may prevent one in five deaths and may be the most potent intervention we can make to reduce child mortality levels rapidly."

Added co-director Dr. Paul Arthur: "The reduced risk of death was also reflected in the illness experience of children. Those who received vitamin A supplementation were less likely to develop illnesses that required treatment at a health centre or a hospital."

Child blindness in the area is also said to have been almost eradicated in the trials, the first major study of its kind in Africa.

"If vitamin A can prevent children from going blind, then why not give it?" asks Gerdy van Noort, head of the maternal and child health care unit of Presbyterian Rural Health, which helped run the Ghana trial.

Globally, nearly 13 million preschool age children are at risk from irreversible eye damage from lack of vitamin A. All face increased risk of premature death.

The Health Ministry is following up the trial with a feasibility study in the region which will link supplementation with its immunisation programme.

One problem will be finance. A Health Ministry proposal for supplementation

in two districts for less than three years put the cost at about \$250,000.

Another problem is delivery. Immunisation records show declining uptake for the last two years. Moreover, unless the government can monitor all children from six months to six years and provide doses every six months, many children may be missed.

Supplementation, however, could be suitable for a short time — until people's diets can be improved.

Changing food habits would take responsibility from hard-pressed administrations, as well as providing other badly-needed nutrients.

Barriers to change will, however, have to be dismantled.

Leafy vegetables, a key source of vitamin A, are part of local diet, but vitamin content is often lost through over-cooking. In addition, they are seasonal and perceived as being scarcer than they used to be. Mma Lamis echoes a common view among older people: "We had more vegetables because we had more land and the rains were better. We could cook bits (a vegetable) or pumpkin leaf every day and still have some left over by the next season. But now, about two or three months after the rains have stopped, the young women will tell you they have no more dry leaves."

Soils are deteriorating and people increasing. Asked whether more land could be given over to cultivating vegetables, 40-year-old farmer Abaa Ayine retorts: "Have I got enough land for my millet? How do you expect me to measure out land only for vegetables?"

Some women have vegetable gardens, but plots are small, and men rarely provide support. Water is scarce, and may have to be carried

many kilometres.

Fruit is another source of vitamin A, but there are sometimes cultural restrictions. Many women, for example, refuse to eat mango or pawpaw while breastfeeding, for fear of spoiling their milk or making their babies ill.

Health centres and clinics are trying to change attitudes to fruit and vegetable consumption, but more could be done through radio and primary health workers.

Tree-planting agencies could support their efforts. Some admit they could encourage cultivation of fruit trees, as well as adding nutritional information to their education programmes.

"It would be no problem to provide more fruit tree seeds for our nurseries," says Franz Zemp, manager of the Bongo Agro-Forestry Project. "We also give assistance to ensure tree survival. Our records show encouraging numbers of trees survived the dry season last year."

But Alex Gyampoh, manager of the U.N.-sponsored Environmental Rehabilitation Project, stresses that fuelwood is his priority. "Regardless of the need to plant fruit trees."


Palm oil could help, says Atardita Akolgo: "My little girl nearly went blind. She couldn't see at dusk, like a chicken."

Then the nurse told me to give her palm oil, one tablespoon a day. Now she sees better than a cat."

Palm oil is not produced in the region, so people buy it instead of the cheaper local alternative, sheabutter, only when they have some cash to spare. Better marketing and distribution would make it more widely available.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development has a \$15 million irrigation programme in the region which will promote dry season cultivation of onions,

Nutrition hit-list



- Anaemia** world's most widespread nutritional deficiency
- Iodine deficiency** commonest preventable cause of retardation
- Vitamin A deficiency** commonest cause of childhood blindness, and a major factor in child deaths

★ Say UN food and health organisations: 'These problems should be largely overcome during the next decade'

Source: FAO/WHO

peppers and tomatoes. Farmers will be expected to follow its guidelines but these could be adapted to incorporate production of leafy vegetables.

The Ministry of Agriculture has not given much attention to vegetable growing, giving point to the comments of chief nutrition officer Rosenna Agbici, who says it is time for everyone to encourage increased fruit and vegetable consumption, but stresses the key role of the

agriculture ministry in promoting production.

Despite the many problems of production and education which arise from attempting to persuade people to change their diets, the approach offers the possibility of a lasting solution.

"The biggest disadvantage of supplementation," says Dr. Kwame Adogboba, regional director of health services, "is that it cannot be made sustainable" — PANOS.

Chronic pain: Real or imagined?

By Elizabeth Rosenthal

NEW YORK — Chronic pain, in the absence of any discernible physical cause, is one of the most common reasons for lost workdays, yet doctors remain unsure about what causes the complaint, how to treat it, or even if it exists.

What do you do when the scans, blood tests and exams indicate nothing wrong, but the patient is incapacitated? "It's a terrible dilemma," said Dr. Kathleen Foley, director of pain service at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Centre in New York. "Pain is what people say it is. And if you start with the concept that you should believe the patient, then how can you say it is real or unreal, and how do you prove it?"

Frustrated by the skyrocketing number of U.S. patients receiving disability payments, most often for lower back complaints, and huge jury awards for "pain and suffering" that no scientist can measure, researchers are striving to understand the genesis of chronic pain and how to treat it.

Many are concluding that chronic pain often results from a cycle of physical and emotional factors that feed on each other: a person with transient pain decides he or she has a pain problem; believing pain is a problem causes a physical response that produces more pain.

Some of the most prominent U.S. pain specialists believe that medical and legal practices actually help set the chronic-pain cycle in motion. The barrage of scans and exotic therapies that doctors prescribe for pain convinces healthy people that they have a serious condition.

Prolonged sick leaves and lawsuits that drag on for years allow patients to get out of shape, which only makes pain worse. These doctors criticise the legal system for awarding damages for pain without insisting that claimants be properly treated

with physical and psychological therapy.

While pain experts unanimously recoil at the notion that large numbers of patients are faking pain for profit, they agree that the psyche frequently converts trivial discomfort or a minor injury into a debilitating lifelong medical condition.

Although a fraction of chronic-pain patients are found to have worn joints or a tendon that is clearly inflamed, the majority have no specific problem that can be found on tests or exams.

"All the evidence suggests that for most people chronic pain is a stress-related disorder, just like ulcers," said Dr. John Loeser, director of the pain clinic at the University of Washington in Seattle. "The difference with pain is that we don't know where to put the tube to look."

Although there are no overall statistics about chronic pain, scientists have compiled extensive data about the current epidemic of lower back pain, the most common type of chronic pain that leads to disability.

In recent years, more than 2 per cent of all U.S. adults reported being unable to work because of this condition, and the cost of their health care plus the compensation they received totaled well over \$50 billion annually.

Five per cent of all visits to doctors are now for back pain, said Dr. Loeser. "And the numbers keep going up and up and up."

The United States has many more people disabled by lower back pain than any other nation in the world, Dr. Loeser said, and surveys of old medical records show that chronic back pain was a rare diagnosis before World War II.

Recent studies have failed to link chronic pain to physical injury or X-ray findings, but they have found that it correlates with such factors as job satisfaction, depression

and the resolution of lawsuits.

Lacking a good understanding of what causes chronic pain or a good yardstick to measure it, doctors, lawyers and juries are forced to make largely arbitrary decisions about which patient will benefit from an injection of anaesthetic into the spine, which claimants deserve large jury awards, and which employees should be granted disability payments.

"The disability system asks doctors to certify that someone has too much pain to work, but we have no mystical power to determine that," Dr. Loeser said. "You can't take an X-ray and see pain; you can't see it on a biopsy. All you have is a patient's statement that he hurts. Judgements are made, but I don't know if they are right or wrong. I do know that they are not based on medical science."

In a study published recently in *The American Journal of Pain Management*, Dr. Michael Weintraub examined 210 people with chronic pain who were involved in litigation.

He found evidence that 63 per cent of the patients had pain that was emotional rather than physical in origin. For example, a person with lower back pain might describe a leg going numb, even though all the nerves that leave the spine in the lower back supply only a small portion of the leg.

Dr. Weintraub believes that many patients become sub-consciously attached to the discomfort since it brings with it financial gain. He has proposed that "chronic pain in litigation" should be treated as a distinct syndrome since patients in this category do not get better with treatment.

"Lawyers have talked about this pain and suffering as if it exists, but it has never been substantiated medically," said Dr. Weintraub. — *The International Herald Tribune*.

Study suggests possible genetic link in depression, substance abuse

By Paul Rezer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — People who have a family member treated for severe depression may be two times more likely than others to develop addiction or depression, according to a study by National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) researchers.

Loring J. Ingraham, a NIMH scientist, said that, studies of both the adoptive and the biological families of patients who have been treated for depression illnesses show evidence of the genetic link.

Dr. Ingraham said that he and Dr. Paul H. Wender,

now at the University of Utah, examined the medical records of 14,500 adopted people in Denmark and found 67 who had been hospitalised for treatment of severe depression.

They then examined records to find the frequency of depression or substance abuse among the biological relatives of the adopted.

Data from these studies were then compared to similar studies of 67 adopted individuals who had not been hospitalised for the mental conditions.

The results, said Dr. Ingraham, showed that among the adopted with depression, about five per cent of their biological relatives also had

some type of depressive disorder and another four per cent had a substance abuse disorder.

In the control group, the 67 adopted who had not been hospitalised for depression, the occurrence of the disorders was only two per cent.

"This means that if someone in your family suffers from severe depression, you and other family members need to be aware that not only are you at risk for developing depression, you also stand an increased chance of developing a substance abuse disorder," Dr. Ingraham said in a statement.

The researcher said the most commonly abused substance among those studied

was alcohol.

Dr. Ingraham said the study was possible in Denmark because the country keeps meticulous records on family relationships and medical treatments.

Dr. Frederick K. Goodwin, NIMH director, said the study provides clear evidence that the increased frequency of substance abuse known to exist among the biological relatives of patients with depressive disorders is due to genetic instead of environmental factors.

Dr. Ingraham recently presented the study at a meeting in Puerto Rico of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology and was interviewed by telephone.

Moderate intake may help to ward off colds

By Celia Hall

Two or three alcoholic drinks every day appear to keep the common cold at bay, but smoking will reverse any of this benefit.

Dr. Andrew Smith, director of the Health Psychology Research Unit at Cardiff University, has also found that when people are stressed they are more likely to catch a cold.

His findings are based on research carried out at the Common Cold Research Unit, before its closure, in a three-year study of 400 volunteers who were given cold viruses. Psychologists were involved to assess the importance of stress and behavioural aspects like alcohol intake.

The adults who drank

moderately — less than three units of alcohol a day — were less likely to have typical cold symptoms, like a runny nose, even though blood measurements could show that they had the virus.

He told the London meeting of the British Psychological Society that only 15 per cent of the moderate drinkers suffered from colds compared to 45 per cent of the non-drinkers. "It seems that a little bit of alcohol is good for you as many other clinical studies have shown," he said.

The researchers believe that moderate regular drinking has a long-term effect; in other words people need to drink moderately, regularly to benefit from the protection against catching a cold. But they feel that excessive drinking would cancel the effect.

Dr. Smith said the reasons for this protection were not properly understood. There may be an effect on the nasal mucus, reducing the secretions of the nose. Another explanation is that alcohol may have an anti-inflammatory effect. "What happens when you get a cold is that the inflammatory response to the virus increases the nasal secretions," he said.

Asked why many people thought that having a drink helped when they had caught a cold, he said either the alcohol simply made them feel better, or the alcohol did affect the runny nose. The findings on stress were slightly different. In this part of the study, 25 per cent of people who felt little stress caught colds compared with 50 per cent of the highly stressed

people. This time, the less stressed volunteers managed to avoid infection altogether rather than catch the cold but remained symptom-free. "The stressed people were more likely to get infected in the first place and more likely to have symptoms," he said.

More work has been done on the links between stress and disease with many studies showing that stressed people are less good at fighting infection. Dr. Smith said there was evidence that stress affected the immune system.

In his paper, he said: "Alternatively, it may alter immune response by changing health-related behaviours such as smoking and alcohol consumption." — *The Independent*.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

I CAME IN LAST

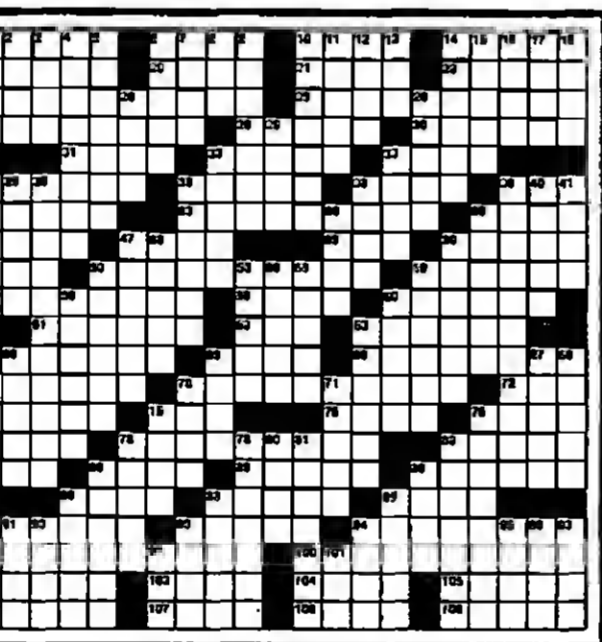
By Joel Davajan

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10 Pines
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13 Gull-bait position
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1. A kind of gobbledygook is in the total sum of "by gosh, by golly, by gee, by gum."

2. Retiree asked for his old job back, claiming he found retirement just too boring.

3. Seller's wife went below deck as she could tell folks she had been "down under."

4. Glen landlady recycles everything. Still must pay heavy toxic dump tax.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. KJACEWAS DEJDRVBCJR JW DBCKK

SVCCSB SBIJYQTB NCQYT JWWBHN

TVNLJAYCN CJ NBYVJH LANCIJRN JY

CBARNTQKN QYT WHYTQKN. — By Earl Ireland

2. ZATZOH QXQPL: X QXKZOH CYK PHURG

VYVAL YRR QXKZO TK: XP RPQXKZOH

CYK TL LGH KY VYTA YUNG. — By Rita Salvaldo

3. ABGPEQDGR ABGDC KAKE ABCJLE

HGDFJDFM ABCDOP LPRALG OR GENGLO

BLEGDFMC DF B. N. — By Duane H. McGee

4. OCLYUPOS BULE BUBLY PAWNE BLEENL

BABBLE BABPAYS AS BULECASH

BNOLW. — By Ed Heddle

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

1. Down
1 Apartment house
2 Empty
3 An A-frame
4 Small lake
5 A young cat
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مكة من الامم

PLO seen to have 'apologised' to Saudis

(Continued from page 1)
and Fatch Central Committee speaks in public, that definitely means that he is speaking on the record and in the name of the organisation," said a senior PLO official in Amman who preferred anonymity. Abu Mazen is one of the senior leaders of Fatch and its central committee.

PLO members here also believe that Abu Mazen would not have spoken the words unless he had some positive indications from the Saudis themselves and that a warming of Saudi-PLO relations could follow.

However, PLO insiders do not expect an overnight mending of the strain in Saudi-PLO relations and an immediate Arafat visit to Saudi Arabia to seal reconciliation.

"There are other issues to be sorted out before such things could happen," said an informed PLO source. "There is the issue of Palestinian 'liberation' tax and other financial matters that need to be settled."

"Liberation" tax is levied by the host Arab governments from Palestinian expatriates working in their countries and given to the PLO.

The Gulf states were the main financial backers of the PLO until the Gulf crisis. The

strain in relations caused by the PLO's stand was immediately followed by a suspension of all financial assistance to the PLO by the Gulf states and as a result the PLO is finding itself in dire financial straits.

The organisation has been forced to adopt a strict belt-tightening approach to its finances and cut many aid programmes, including assistance given to families of martyrs.

Mohammad Milhem, a former member of the PLO Executive Committee, described Abu Mazen's "apology" as "outrageous."

"If this is indeed an apology then it is not acceptable," said Mr. Milhem, a former mayor of Halhoul in the West Bank who was expelled by the Israeli occupation authorities.

"There is no reason why the PLO should have to apologise for its stand during the Gulf crisis any more than Jordan should have to," he told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Milhem said Jordan had taken an honourable stand in refusing to apologise to the Gulf states for its position vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis.

"Next thing you know we will be apologising to the Israelis for fighting the occupation of our land," Mr. Milhem said.

Israel offers to open nuclear, other sites

(Continued from page 1)

East," Mr. Eagleburger said. He said it was important for nations to tackle the challenge of weapons of mass destruction wherever possible.

"I would therefore urge the members of the Arab League to seize this opportunity and sign the chemical weapons convention," Mr. Eagleburger said.

"Doing so would be a step towards, and not away from, making the Middle East a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, as called for by President (Hosni) Mubarak of Egypt."

Mr. Eagleburger said that so long as there are holdouts, doubts will be raised as to these nations' intentions.

"Nowhere is this more important today than in the Middle East, a region which over the past 30 years has been home to more active chemical weapons programmes — and which has seen more chemical weapons use — than any other part of the world," he said.

"It is therefore particularly disappointing that so many Middle Eastern states are absent from this ceremony today."

Iraq is the only state besides the United States and Russia that admits owning chemical weapons. Iraqi officials have said Iraq will not sign the treaty and about a majority of Arab states is taking the same position.

A major purpose of the agreement was to curb a new Middle East arms race following the Gulf war two years ago and the disclosure of Iraq's chemical arsenal.

The U.N. convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons features revolutionary verification procedures meant to ensure that no state will be able to make or conceal large stocks of deadly chemical agents.

For the first time, international inspectors will be empowered to search "anywhere, anytime" for suspected chemical arms. Signatories will have no right to refuse access to production plants, military bases or stores.

Israel seeks to thwart U.N. sanctions

(Continued from page 1)

the return of all evictees. Dr. Ghali has threatened the United Nations could take further steps.

Mr. Peres said he expected to meet U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger in Paris. Israel is counting on the United States, its closest ally, to block sanctions with its veto in the Security Council.

The Israeli daily newspaper Hadasot said Mr. Rabin wanted to delay a Security Council debate until after U.S. President-elect Bill Clinton took office next Wednesday.

The unsecured story gave no reason for this and Mr. Rabin's spokesman declined comment. Outgoing President George Bush would face less political risk backing sanctions than Mr. Clinton would.

Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo demanded Tuesday the United Nations impose sanctions if Israel did not comply. They did not adopt a Palestinian suggestion that they suspend the 14-month-old Middle East peace talks.

Spokesman Hanan Ashrawi said she and four other Palestinian peace negotiators met four members of the Israeli Knesset (parliament) Tuesday in Arah East Jerusalem for informal discussions.

"We said we are unable to return to negotiations unless Israel returns the (evictees) and implements Resolution 799," Dr. Ashrawi told Reuters.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation said Monday it would boycott the 14-month-old talks until Israel returned the Palestinians.

Palestinian delegate Saeb Erekat said a letter was sent to Mr. Eagleburger informing him of the decision to boycott the talks.

Dr. Erekat quoted the letter as saying that "the absence of Israeli accountability and the lack of any effective intervention by the co-sponsors have given Israel a free hand to pursue such a destructive course which culminated in the latest deportations on a massive scale and subsequently sabotaged the negotiations."

In Marj Al Zohour, Lebanon, the Palestinian evictees lashed out at the United Nations, accusing it of double standards in seeking to implement its resolutions on Iraq and not on Israel.

The 413 Palestinians also criticised Arab states for not pulling out from the peace talks. "We are very frustrated when we see Security Council resolutions implemented on some sides, like Iraq, and not implemented on others," said Fayez Al Khadour, 33.

"The Security Council uses double standards," said Hussein Abu Quaik. "When it comes to Israel, the U.N. does not try to force it to comply like in other places."

Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi called on Dr. Ghali to immediately impose sanctions on Israel to force it to implement Security Council Resolution 799.

Allied planes attack Iraqi sites

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Hamdoun said: "I just called in to the president of the Security Council that Iraq will stop transferring its property from Umm Qasr in the demilitarised zone until resolving the problems that are outstanding with the UNIKOM people (U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission) over there."

He also said that Iraq would "approve the flight requests for the special commission planes to Iraq," a reference to U.N. aircraft which demolition teams to Baghdad.

Iraq last week ordered a temporary halt to any further U.N. flights over its territory, saying weapons destruction teams and other U.N. personnel should charter Iraqi commercial airliners or travel overland.

Mr. Hamdoun said the United Nations would have to take responsibility for the safety of those flights "in case of a military attack against Iraq."

Earlier Wednesday, Iraqi salvagers crossed into Umm Qasr for a fourth consecutive day to retrieve material from a former navy base.

What used to be Iraqi warehouses were without roofs or windows, and a bunker that housed Silkorm missiles was swept clean except for empty wooden boxes and old Iraqi newspapers and booklets.

"Four of the six bunkers are totally empty, while one has conventional anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons and another has small bottles of unidentified chemicals," said Abdul Latif Kabaj, spokesman for UNIKOM patrolling the disputed border since April 1991.

A senior Kuwaiti official said

he hoped the allied military action against Iraq would prevent further "miscalculations" by Baghdad.

"What I hope is that the Iraqi regime will avoid their continued miscalculations. As a small country that is what we are hoping for," Suleiman Majed Al Shabin, the Foreign Ministry under-secretary, said in a telephone interview.

He said Kuwait had demanded that Iraq comply with ceasefire terms to which Baghdad itself had agreed.

A spokesman for President Saddam Hussein defiantly pledged earlier Wednesday that Iraq was determined to recover Kuwait.

"Kuwait shall return to Iraq in defiance of the Security Council and America," Abdul Jabbar Muhsein said in an editorial in the government newspaper Al Jamhuriyah. He described Kuwait as an "integral part of Iraq."

Defence Minister Ali Hassan Al Majeed told President Saddam Hussein that his soldiers

were standing firm in their defence of the country.

At 1700 GMT — when media reports said the allied planes were attacking targets in Iraq — state radio began its news bulletin with an item about aid to Palestinians in Jordan.

After the news, the radio carried a quotation from President Saddam — "Baghdad will remain a beacon for Muslims and a support for Palestine."

Later the radio reported: "Criminal Bush seems to be bracing himself for a fresh aggression against Iraq." It said Iraq had declared it would "respond with every available means in defence of its independence."

As U.S. media reported that Washington and its allies had sent planes to attack missiles stationed in southern Iraq, Mr. Majeed sent President Saddam a telegram to mark Sunday's second anniversary of the start of the Gulf war.

"The treacherous people have returned after less than two years to commit aggression against Iraq to undermine what has been reconstructed by the brave Mujahideen," it said.

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Bosnian leader optimistic of peace plan

(Continued from page 1)

negotiations if they continued to press for their own state-within-a-state.

But in what some diplomats said was a potential let-out clause, Mr. Karadzic said he needed seven days grace to win the approval of the assembly of his self-styled "Serb republic."

That approval was immediately put in doubt. Biljana Plavsic, vice-president of the Serb republic, said hours after Mr. Karadzic's agreement that the deputies would reject it.

Mr. Karadzic replied: "I also have some anxiety about that but I do believe I will get a majority. I'm sure I will not have a unanimous decision of our parliament, that's what shows the reaction of Mrs. Plavsic."

Asked what would happen if the deputies refused, he said: "I should offer my resignation."

A British U.N. peacekeeper was killed Wednesday in central Bosnia, and Sarajevans bitterly dismissed news of the breakthrough in peace talks in Geneva as more maneuvering by the Serbs.

Wednesday's fighting in the central Bosnian town of Gornji Vakuf was reportedly between Muslim and Croat forces, underscoring the shakiness of their nominal alliance against the Serbs.

The British peacekeeper was killed by small-arms fire in the town, but the identity of the attackers was not immediately known, a Ministry of Defence spokesman in London said. The latest death means 23 U.N.

peacekeepers have been killed in fighting in the former Yugoslavia.

Sarajevo spent a relatively peaceful night after the announcement late Tuesday that Mr. Karadzic had reversed his earlier opposition to the Geneva peace plan.

But Sarajevo residents bitterly dismissed Mr. Karadzic's move, and some accused the international community of papering over differences in a way that Mr. Karadzic and Mr. Milosevic would later exploit to ensure continued Serb control over most of Bosnia.

At least 17,000 people have been killed since Bosnian Serbs took up arms after the republic's majority Muslims and Croats voted for independence from Yugoslavia. Bosnian Serb irregulars, backed by Serbia, have seized about 70 per cent of Bosnia's territory.

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January 1993 Programme

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Place: The National Music Conservatory
Registration Fee: JD 15.

Saturday, 23 January 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
PIANO RECITAL

Under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein, Amman Al Hachicho, a young Arab concert pianist living between Bonn and Moscow, will perform a very colorful and enjoyable program. The program includes pieces by: Bach, Beethoven, Bartok, Tschalkovsky and Liszt.

Place: The Royal Cultural Centre
Main Theatre.
Ticket Price: JD 7.

Co-sponsored by Lufthansa and Jirles
Rihani and Sons Company

Tuesday, 26 January 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
VIOLIN AND PIANO RECITAL

Aram Zaraslan, concert violinist in residence at the National Music Conservatory meets Australian concert pianist Robert Curry in an exciting recital. They will be performing pieces by: Beethoven, Liszt, Wieniawski, Stravinsky and others.

Place: The Royal Cultural Centre
Main Theatre.
Ticket Price: JD 7.

Co-sponsored by the Australian
Embassy in Jordan

Saturday, 30 January 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
LUTE RECITAL

Bill Badley, British lutenist, will take the audience on a musical trip back to the golden days of this instrument. The lute is considered the successor of the oud and the precursor of the guitar.

Place: The Royal Cultural Centre
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Ticket Price: JD 5.

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French driver Pierre Lartigue steers his Citroën ZX across the desert in the Adrar-Chenachen stage of the Paris-Dakar Rally.

Saby tightens grip in Paris-Dakar Rally

PARIS (R) — Bruno Saby's lead in the Paris-Dakar Rally looked even more impregnable as he took a trouble-free second place in the seventh African stage and increased the gap over nearest rival Pierre Lartigue Tuesday.

Saby's Mitsubishi led fellow Frenchman Lartigue, in a Citroën, by one hour 42 minutes. Lartigue was slowed down by three punctures on the 650-km leg from Chenachen in Algeria to Bir Amrane, Mauritania.

The stage was won by a third Frenchman Jean-Pierre Fontenay, in another Mitsubishi but he remains outside the top 10 after breaking a back axle early in the rally.

"I didn't start the day aiming to set the fastest time," said Fontenay. "But after a puncture we took the spare wheel off the roof and went quicker because the aerodynamics were better."

Frenchman Hubert Auriol took third place in the leg and remains in that position overall but is more than four and a half hours adrift of the leader.

Stephane Peterhansel kept a tight grip on the lead among the bikes, although he was content to finish in third place on the stage behind Jordi Arcos of Spain and fellow Frenchman Thierry Charbonnier. All three are Yamaha riders.

Charbonnier, second overall, closed the gap on Peterhansel slightly but still remained 82 minutes behind.

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	PCT.	GB
New York	19	12	.612	—
New Jersey	18	13	.585	2
Boston	17	17	.500	3 1/2
Orlando	14	14	.500	3 1/2
Philadelphia	11	18	.379	7
Miami	10	21	.323	9
Washington	10	22	.313	9 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	23	10	.697	—
Cleveland	20	13	.606	3
Charlotte	17	14	.548	5 1/2
Detroit	16	16	.500	6 1/2
Indiana	15	17	.469	7 1/2
Atlanta	14	17	.452	8
Milwaukee	14	18	.438	8 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

Utah	21	10	.677	—
San Antonio	18	13	.581	3
Houston	15	16	.484	6
Denver	8	22	.267	12 1/2
Minnesota	6	23	.207	14
Dallas	2	27	.069	18

Pacific Division

Phoenix	23	5	.821	—
Seattle	22	8	.733	2
Portland	20	10	.667	4
Golden State	18	14	.563	7
L.A. Lakers	18	14	.563	7
L.A. Clippers	17	16	.515	8 1/2
Sacramento	13	17	.433	11

NBA

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♦ J 7 6 5 2
♥ A 6
♦ 8 4
♣ 7 5 3

EAST
♦ K Q
♥ K Q
♦ J 7 4 3
♣ Q 9 7 3

WEST
♦ A 8 4 3
♥ K Q
♦ K Q 10 9 8
♣ J 5

SOUTH
♦ 10 9
♥ 5 2
♦ A K 10 2
♣ A K Q J 4

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♦ 1 ♣ Pass 2 ♣
3 ♣ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♣.

There are some card combinations which recur regularly in different guises. Recognize them, know how to play them and save thousands of points over the course of time.

When South could not make a takeout double of two hearts, North gave up any hope of a spade contract. East-West, already stretched to the limit, were quite happy to sell out to an enemy partner.

West led the king of hearts and declarer was looking at three sure losers in the major suits. To make

The winning technique is simple. After taking the ace of hearts, declarer should immediately duck a diamond. When South regains the lead, two rounds of trumps are drawn, followed by the ace and king of diamonds. If the suit breaks, declarer can draw the last trump. As the cards lie in the diagram, declarer can ruff his remaining diamond for the fulfilling trick.

Sabatini edges into last eight as Sanchez sequence ends

SYDNEY (R) — Top seed Gabriela Sabatini continued her shaky progress through the draw at the New South Wales Open Wednesday as luck finally ran out for men's defending champion Emilio Sanchez.

Sabatini, who blazed her way to the same title in memorable style 12 months ago, again struggled for long periods before completing a sketchy 6-4 4-6 6-2 second round victory over American Patty Fendick.

Spain's Sanchez, who collected the men's trophy at White City last year without dropping a set, suffered a similar fate to the one brother Javier endured Tuesday by losing 7-6 6-4 to Sweden's resurgent Jonas Svensson.

The men's draw remains unpredictable, eighth seed Henrik Holm merely the latest casualty. His preparations for next week's Australian Open were abruptly curtailed by a 7-5 6-4 loss to another Swede, Nicklas Kulti, winner of last week's Australian Hardcourt title.

Kulti now plays top seed Pete Sampras, who stepped up a gear in defeating Australian doubles specialist Mark Woodforde 6-4 6-3.

Consistency is Sabatini's constant goal, too, but the Argentine player had one of her infuriating off-days against the gritty Fendick.

The American squandered six break points in the first set, was 4-0 up at one stage in the second and hit a high percentage of sweet forehands past her startled opponent.

A stream of unforced errors proved her undoing, however, as Sabatini held on to secure a quarter-final place against Ger-

many's Barbara Rittner. "I didn't play well. This is my first tournament of the year but I think I'm going to get better each match," Sabatini said.

Svensson's win over Sanchez again demonstrated the narrow gap between the world's best 100 male players.

The Swede, among the world's top 10 in 1991, dropped out of the leading 10 last year. He found himself forced to qualify this week but remains a useful customer in Australian conditions.

Little-known Australian Michael Tebbitt, ranked 870 on the computer, came close to causing his second shock of the week before losing out 2-6 7-6 6-2 to Italy's Omar Camporese.

Women's seventh seed Lori McNeil failed to survive into the last eight. She was beaten 6-1 7-6 by former champion Pam Shriver.

South African Wayne Ferreira was in ambitious mood after crushing Australian Sandon Stolle 6-4 6-2.

The 21-year-old is convinced he can break into the world's top five before the end of the year and has bought an apartment in Paris to ease the travelling pressure between tournaments.

Seles says hard to repeat 1992 Grand Slam wins

The world number one women's tennis player, Monica Seles, admitted Wednesday it would be hard to repeat last year's three Grand Slam victories.

Seles, still only 19, told reporters before her defence of the year's first Grand Slam, the Australian Open, that success in



Lori McNeil

1993 would depend on her fitness.

Seles won the Australian, French and United States Opens last year. She was deprived of all four Grand Slams by world number two, Germany's Steffi Graf, who beat her in the Wimbledon finals.

"I think last year was pretty lucky. The Australian Open was good but the French could have been Steffi's or mine and in the U.S. Open I had a lot of luck with the draw," she said Wednesday. "It can't go on being in three

Grand Slams and getting into the finals of every tournament," Seles said.

World number three Gabriela Sabatini, who is playing in the New South Wales Open in Sydney this week, was also convinced the left-hander can be beaten.

"I don't think it will be hard to catch up to Seles," the Argentine told reporters in Sydney. "She's a very beatable player because mentally she's very tough, but technically in her game she is very beatable," Sabatini added.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Seagram retired from horse racing

LONDON (R) — Seagram, winner of the 1991 Grand National at Aintree, has been retired from horse racing after a series of below par performances. Trainer David Barons and owner Sir Eric Parker took the decision after the 13-year-old was pulled up in a meeting at Sandown, England. Seagram had not won a race since his Aintree victory, which capped a career of 16 wins and almost 219,529 pounds sterling (\$340,270) prize money.

Girardelli wins third Super-G of season

ST. ANTON, Austria (AP) — Mare Girardelli of Luxembourg won the season's third Super-Giant slalom, posting his 40th World Cup victory to tie for second place on the all-time list. Girardelli and Pirmin Zurbriggen, the retired Swiss ace, now share second place, behind Swedish legend Ingemar Stenmark, who is far ahead with 86 World Cup victories. Girardelli, the Olympic Super-G silver medalist, collected 100 points for his victory and now has 713 to Tomba's 472.

Bonaly leads women's European skating

HELSINKI (AP) — Two-time European champion Surya Bonaly of France, showing more artistry than before, moved into the lead of the women's singles at the European Figure Skating Championships while Russians Evgenia Shishikova and Vadim Naumov topped the pairs event. Bonaly, skating to jazz and percussion music, earned marks from 5.5 to 5.8 for her technical, short program which counts one-third of the total score. Each skater is required to do certain free-style spins and jumps. A noted jumper, Bonaly, 19, has worked on her style to impress the judges. It showed as she ended with six first-place votes from the nine-judge panel. She had the best technical marks of the event.

Wright scores 2 to give Arsenal semifinal berth

LONDON (R) — England striker Ian Wright continued his goal plundering in cup matches, striking twice against Nottingham Forest to put Arsenal through to the semifinals of the League Cup.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JANUARY 15, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll-Fligher Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: An unexpected moon in Scorpio makes it a good day to do research and facilitates study that requires focus. Avoid a tendency to brood. Unresolved emotions lie just beneath the surface.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) In the morning, devise a course of action to handle obligations more successfully; use care with bigwigs in the afternoon but tonight go after new ambitions.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Consult an influential associate in the morning to increase your prosperity; then this afternoon avoid a scrappy newcomer; tonight enjoy proven pleasure with mate.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) A more comprehensive approach at your duties is advised while in the afternoon don't argue over obligations; tonight enjoy the company of longtime partners.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) New aims can steer you in right directions early; after lunch avoid a calculating person but tonight you can rid of pending tasks.

LEO (July 22 to August 21) Do something special to please attachment in the morning; then don't let an annoyed associate get you down but tonight you can have romantic happiness.

VIRGO (August 22 to September 22) Come to a better understanding with a partner while later you will find it necessary to avoid extravagance and in the evening enjoy an amusing fellow associate.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Year environment can be made to glow in the morning after which do nothing to upset a family member while tonight visit a charming companion, relative.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Arrange for recreational activities in the morning but use care on the highway in the afternoon and tonight you see ways to increase income.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Your home can wisely claim your attention in the morning, after lunch be careful not to overextend your assets and tonight avoid forcing gaining aims; and have a happy time with attachment.

AQUARIUS (January 21 to February 19) Go after your material ambitions in the morning while avoiding a secret anxiety in the afternoon and tonight, long satisfactory pleasures are fine.

PISCES (February 20 to March 20) Show your charm in the morning and you get most anything you desire; but in the afternoon ward off a flimsy acquaintance and tonight build practical assets.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY JANUARY 14, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll-Fligher Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Back up associates instead of criticizing them is the Moon squares Mars, Uranus, Neptune, Mercury and the Sun. Keep everything on an even keel and don't take to heart any criticism by a loved one.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Stick to working out problems already confronting you during the daytime and avoid going off on a tangent that appeals to you or trouble developments.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Avoid obligations that have been bugging you for a while and look into some interesting means by which you can gain some new avenues that appeal to you.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Both influential persons and partners can be a disappointment in aiding you in some outside conditions so wait until evening before tackling them.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) You have some important tasks to do and despite the temptation to go off on some intriguing situation, be sure to complete promised chores instead.

LEO (July 22 to August 21) Payment of debts and other promises made should be done before you yield to that desire to go off with some old companion or to long time pleasures.

VIRGO (August 22 to September 22) Whatever you have that con-

licts between family and an associate requires some care now in scheduling your time and energies so the neither is ignored.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) You have a number of vital communications to get out so handle them efficiently first, then you can look to ways to improve your environmental conditions.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You need to early decide whether to concentrate on your business affairs or your creative expression of your talents for both need action now.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Your personal aims now and those of your family seem to be at loggerheads and since both are vital to your security, arrange desperate handling of them.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 20) Don't allow a private anxiety to keep you from going out and accomplishing those results to which you have talent and have been looking forward to.

AQUARIUS (January 21 to February 19) Friends and acquaintances can be a real disappointment for you but if you spend your time working out your own practical affairs all is well.

PISCES (February 20 to March 20) Consider your own personal wishes now and don't let a higher up get you down by discouraging you about how best to express your capabilities.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"When Stanley gives me a compliment he does it one word per day to make it last longer."

JUMBLE.

by Henri Arnold

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

BYRIN

WHOYS

DOUBEY

RAMMOT

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ENSUE CAKED PAYOFF BEFOUL
Answer: What these comics had for breakfast—COFFEE AND "PUNS"

THE Daily Crossword by Craig Schultz

ACROSS

1 Set

3 Simplifier

9 Bodies

14 Mean rings

15 Leave

16 Put an — (to continue)

17 One looked up to

18 Confine

19 Peppard's

20 Colletates

22 Sounds of pain

23 Shapers

24 Smile broadly

25 Get away from

27 Parity or dime

28 Contender

31 One at — (singly)

32 Much

33 First try stone

34 Book by Roger Kahn

37 Geologic time periods

38 Fighting men

39 Not a —

40 Later

41 Kind of school

42 Blow open

43 Alan or Cheryl

44 By the — of the 7 parts

45 Estate houses

46 Portage

48 Excuse

53 Glass base

54 Affection

56 Plumber's stock

58 Concerning

59 Hiccups

60 Active one

61 Prehistoric tool

62 Seaweed

63 Systematically

64 Vigor

65 Writer Ephron

66 Suit to

67 — as a bait

68 Know-it-all

69 Playgrounds

70 Ordinary

71 Pastor's group

72 Track person

73 Personal staff

74 Aides

75 Got down

76 Palm tree

77 Approximately

78 Mifed

79 Small hollow

80 Craze

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Financial Markets

in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date: 12/11/92	Tokyo Close Date: 13/1/93
Sterling Pound	1.5335	1.5390
Deutsche Mark	1.6320	1.6365
Swiss Franc	1.4993	1.5083
French Franc	5.5340	5.5475
Japanese Yen	125.25	125.87
European Currency Unit	1.2045	1.2008

USD Per JGD
European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT

Interbank Bid Rates for currencies covering U.S. Dollar's 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.12	3.25	3.57	3.81
Sterling Pound	6.87	6.87	6.75	6.66
Deutsche Mark	8.50	8.31	7.93	7.37
Swiss Franc	5.43	5.50	5.37	5.18
French Franc	11.37	11.37	10.25	9.12
Japanese Yen	3.75	3.65	3.62	3.43
European Currency Unit	10.18	10.18	9.81	9.06

Forward Rates
Date: 13/1/93

Metal	USD/oz	JGD/oz	Metal	USD/oz	JGD/oz
Gold	328.00	6.45	Silver	3.68	.080

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin
Date: 13/1/93

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.689	0.691
Sterling Pound	1.0596	1.0609
Deutsche Mark	0.4205	0.4227
Swiss Franc	0.4585	0.4608
French Franc	0.1240	0.1246
Japanese Yen	0.5465	0.5492
Dutch Guilder	0.3747	0.3766
Swedish Krona	0.0923	0.0928
Italian Lira	0.0458	0.0460
Belgian Franc	0.02047	0.02051

Other Currencies
Date: 13/1/93

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7970	1.8180
Lebanese Lira	0.03635	0.03915
Saudi Riyal	0.1833	0.1845
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2350	2.2900
Qatari Riyal	0.1866	0.1880
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.7560	1.7750
UAE Dirham	0.1866	0.1880
Greek Drachma	0.31325	0.32525
Cypriot Pound	1.4125	1.4325

For 100
CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	11/1/93	Close	12/1/93	Close
All-Share	182.03		182.04	
Banking Sector	130.84		130.71	
Insurance Sector	197.87		198.40	
Industry Sector	251.40		251.26	
Services Sector	247.36		249.46	

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.2795/800	Canadian dollar	1.6305/15
	1.8380/90	Deutsche marks	1.4985/90
	33.61/65	Dutch guilders	53.5300/55
	5.5300/50	Swiss francs	125.95/126.00
	1508/1510	Belgian francs	6.9690/790
	7.4900/5000	French francs	1.5470/80
	6.9690/790	Italian lire	3327.95/328.45
	6.3150/250	Japanese yen	
	1.5470/80	Swedish crowns	
One sterling	327.95/328.45	Norwegian crowns	
One ounce of gold		Danish crowns	

Sweden's premier sees stronger crown

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden's Prime Minister Carl Bildt, defending a controversial budget plan, said Tuesday he is determined not to repeat the mistakes of the 1980s.

In an interview with Reuters, the prime minister also said the Swedish crown is likely to float for some considerable time but added the value of the crown should firm as Swedish export prices pick up.

"The important thing is not to repeat the mistakes of the 1980s. This budget shows we are aware of that. We will get strong improvement... it won't be quick but it will happen," Mr. Bildt said.

Mr. Bildt partly blames Sweden's recession, now entering

its third year, on the highly expansive financial policies under the opposition Social Democrats in the 1980s which led to growing inflation, increased borrowing and an overheated economy.

Sweden was forced to let the crown float freely on foreign exchange markets on Nov. 19 as pessimism about the country's economy fuelled widespread speculation against the currency.

It had previously unilaterally pegged the crown to the European Currency Unit (ECU).

"Under current circumstances we have to be prepared for the crown floating during a considerable period of time," Mr. Bildt said. But he added it "is reasonable to assume that we'll get a stronger crown as our export figures start to improve."

Swedish exports are expected to rise around five per cent this year and eight per cent next year.

Mr. Bildt says his minority centre-right government is now on course to pull Sweden out of recession.

On Monday, Finance Minister Anne Wibble presented a budget that will slash 16.8 billion crowns (\$2.27 billion) off costs and make the unemployed, students and pensioners worse off.

Mr. Bildt said the budget would help improve the economy and keep underlying inflation at two per cent in the next two years.

The budget forecast a state spending deficit this fiscal year of 19.3 billion crowns (\$2.68 billion) and a 162.3 billion crown (\$21.9 billion) shortfall in the

year starting July 1.

It drew immediate criticism from the opposition Social Democrats whose leader Ingvar Carlsson called it a "catastrophe." He demanded more spending on infrastructure and training in order to mop up the rising tide of unemployment.

But Mr. Bildt remained confident the measures would become law. "There will probably be a struggle, but I see nothing that would lead to an acute problem in parliament," he said.

Mr. Bildt also said one of his goals was to bring Swedish interest rates down to the same level as German rates. "The goal is that the interest rate differential versus (German) rates should be as little as possible," he said.

Iran Majlis commission trims 10% of draft budget

NICOSIA (R) — The head of a key Iranian parliamentary panel said Tuesday it had trimmed 10 per cent from the government's proposed budget for next year but confirmed a planned devaluation of the rial.

Economists branded as inflationary and unrealistic the government's draft budget for the year starting March 21 which would nearly double expenditure and incorporate a sharp devaluation of the rial for much of the economy.

"To make the budget figures more realistic, the proposed ceiling has been reduced by 10 per cent," Tehran radio quoted Hossein Shahroodi, head of the Majlis (parliament) finance commission, as saying.

"Total government revenue has now been set at more than 20 trillion rials," Mr. Shahroodi said, down from 23.5 trillion in the draft presented by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to Majlis last month.

Mr. Shahroodi said in case of a revenue shortfall, the govern-

ment would cut allocations for some development projects rather than borrow from the central bank.

Tehran's Resalat daily quoted Mr. Shahroodi as saying two weeks ago that the draft overestimated Iran's oil income at \$17.9 billion and he was sure total government revenue would not exceed 17 trillion rials.

The draft has to be approved by Majlis after revisions in several commissions, including finance.

The draft envisages no deficit because government revenue is bulged as a result of the floating of the currency. The government plans to stop selling most sectors dollars at concessionary rates of about 67 and 600 rials from next year. The floating rate is currently about 1,500 rials per dollar.

"The policy of adopting a unified exchange rate is a brave step which will be very beneficial for the improving the economic system although it might cause some tensions," Mr. Shahroodi said. The head of Plan and Budget

Guinness eliminates 700 whisky jobs

LONDON (AP) — Guinness Plc, the liquor giant, said Tuesday it will eliminate 700 jobs in a cost-cutting campaign at its United Distillers whisky business in Scotland. Guinness said five distilleries and three bottling operations will be shut as the jobs are eliminated over the next two years. United Distillers now has about 5,000 workers in Scotland. Guinness is at the same time modernising its operations through a £125 million (\$192.5 million) programme for both the whisky business in Scotland and its cruzcampo beer business in Spain, where a round of job cuts is soon to be announced.

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Three major Jordanian firms unify purchases in a joint tender

By Samir Shafiq

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Three Jordanian public shareholding companies have given their private operations an extra power, a stronger national bind and a louder voice in international business circles when they launched their first joint tender few days ago in response to the idea put by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to Jordanian businesses to group their foreign purchases to achieve greater benefits.

According to engineers Isa Matarnah, Shukri Ukleh and Fawzi Hamzeh, heads of procurement departments at the Arab Potash Co., the Phosphate Mining Co. and the Jordan Cement Co. respectively, a committee representing the three companies was formed last year to study channelling various foreign purchases of equipment and spare parts through joint tenders.

Mr. Matarnah said the task was not easy as each company had to check its stock and evaluate its needs for a year in addition to preparing technical specifications for each item amid the necessary administrative requirements at each company.

After a thorough examination of needed materials and equipment, the committee decided to launch the first joint tender this year and chose as a trial experiment importing tyres and conveyor belts.

Mr. Matarnah said that both items were very much used and had great similarity in specifications at the three companies.

Mr. Ukleh emphasised that studies that had been done on unifying purchase orders were comprehensive and detailed and there was no possibility that the newly-adopted system would fail.

He said that the reason behind describing the first tender as experimental was only to evaluate the feedback from suppliers and examine how best the terms of the tender should be amended if need be.

"The evaluation of this experimental tender is absolutely not to see if the system is viable or not. The set up is unquestionably here to stay," Mr. Ukleh stressed.

Both engineers highlighted the following advantages that would be of great value to the three companies:

1) Forming a substantial purchasing unit that would sharpen supply offers to best quality at cheapest prices due to the higher import volume;

2) Exchange information and other benefits among the three Jordanian companies;

3) Narrow specification differences of needed products and, in the long run, create unified requirements;

4) Obtain better delivery terms from foreign suppliers;

5) Form larger stocks of a product that can fulfill the needs of the three companies at all times.

Mr. Ukleh and Mr. Matarnah said the new unit would, in addition, be a deterrent to any supplier against fallacies because any misconduct on the part of the exporter would cause a large-scale damage to his reputation in Jordan and in the region for having failed to properly honour a huge order to a major and main Mideast importer.

The engineers estimated the tyres and conveyor belts' order to be roughly in the range of \$3 million.

Mr. Hamzeh highly esteemed the Crown Prince's idea to merge foreign purchases and credited Ali Ensour, the director-general of the Arab Potash Co., for translating the idea into a real function.

He said that it was Mr. Ensour's deep knowledge of the phosphate company, which he had headed in the past, that enabled him to follow up on establishing the new body to launch joint tenders.

"Honestly, the link started between the phosphate and potash companies and we (the cement company) were invited to join later," Mr. Hamzeh said.

Mr. Hamzeh drew parallels between the group of the three companies and the Central Tenders Committee which launches all government tenders and noted that the system was very efficient and cost saving.

The cement company engineer estimated that the total volume of foreign purchases for the three companies would be less than \$50 million annually as not all the equipment and spares qualify to be launched in joint tenders.

He said that a few other firms might join the tender consortium soon. He expected them to be mainly the petroleum refinery, the white cement company, the electricity authority, the iron and steel companies and the tobacco company.

"I don't think the pharmaceutical companies can join us because their operations are quite different but, nevertheless, they can merge their own foreign purchases in joint tenders like us," Mr. Hamzeh pointed out.

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WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Children devastated by Sri Lankan wars

COLOMBO (AP) — A decade of ethnic conflicts has ravaged Sri Lanka's children who face poverty, malnutrition and trauma every day of their lives, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said Tuesday. Children have been orphaned, crippled and deprived of education because of the lingering Tamil war in the north and a 1987-1989 ethnic revolt in the south, the fund said. It gave no figures of how many children had suffered, but a government study said last year about 457,000 children were affected by the Tamil war and the abortive Sinhalese revolt. The Tamil separatist war has claimed more than 17,500 lives since it began in 1983. As many as 50,000 people are believed to have been killed in a brutal government crackdown on members of a leftist Sinhalese Party that tried to overthrow the government. The conflicts have had "a devastating impact on the quality of life of children and women," UNICEF said while signing its fifth country programme in Sri Lanka. Under the programme, UNICEF will contribute \$36.8 million in assistance to the government for the welfare of children, mainly through nutrition and control of infant mortality rates.

IRA man shot dead without warning

ENNIISKILLIN, Northern Ireland (R) — Undercover British soldiers shot dead one of the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) guerrillas without giving him a chance to surrender, a Northern Ireland inquest has ruled. Scamus McElwaine, 25, was killed and a second IRA guerrilla was wounded in 1986 near the village of Ranelagh, near the Irish border, as they prepared a bomb ambush against security forces. At the time of the shooting, McElwaine was on the run after escaping from the top security Maze prison with other members of the IRA. He was serving a life sentence for the murder of two members of the security forces. A jury at a coroner's court in Enniskillen agreed that troops had not challenged McElwaine before he was hit by an initial burst of gunfire. The jury also said they fired again five minutes later as McElwaine lay injured.

Mass field for Nigerian presidency

ABUJA (R) — Retired army officers, former politicians and wealthy merchants are among 102 people in the race for Nigeria's civilian presidency, and a military government official said the number could swell to 600. The mass field for the presidency has heightened concern that a difficult selection process might inflame regional rivalries and result in large-scale post-election violence that scuttled last year's attempt to pick a new executive leader. The right-of-centre National Republican Convention (NRC) reported 55 candidates to 47 for the moderate leftist Social Democratic Party (SDP). Two of the candidates are women. After a convoluted selection process in all 30 states, each party must produce one candidate for a June 12 poll before President Ibrahim Babangida's planned handover in August.

Kidnapped Aga Khan official feared dead

KARACHI, Pakistan (R) — A Pakistani tycoon and senior representative of Prince Karim Aga Khan kidnapped eight months ago is feared dead, officials said. Ashiq Ali Hussain, 58, is thought to have died about a week after he was kidnapped by three armed men on a Karachi street on May 17 last year, said an official of the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee (CPLA). "He suffered from severe diabetes and probably died a week after he was kidnapped," said Naseem Hagi, a founder of the private group, which has crusaded for three years to halt a rash of kidnappings in southern Pakistan. He may have gone into a coma and his kidnappers would have been unable to seek hospital treatment, Mr. Hagi said. Mr. Hussain was a prominent figure in the Ismaili sect headed by the Aga Khan and was president of the Aga Khan Federation Council of Pakistan. "We still hope to solve this mystery and have not given up the investigation," Mr. Hagi said.

Bush gets 'clean bill of health'

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush emerged smiling from Bethesda Naval Hospital after his annual physical examination Tuesday, holding both thumbs up. "Clean bill of health," the president said. Dr. Burton Lee, the White House physician, said upon Mr. Bush's return to work in the Oval Office, "there isn't anything" wrong with the president. Dr. Lee said no recurrences were found of the non-cancerous skin growths that had been removed from Mr. Bush's face last March. In a brief written statement later, Dr. Lee disclosed that Mr. Bush was injected with cortisone to ease "recent persistent pain" in his left hip. He provided no other details on the pain or the treatment, but said that over the past four years Mr. Bush's "osteoarthritic problems with his hips... have not progressed significantly."

Court upholds CIA's dismissal of gay spy

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) firing of a gay spy on grounds that he posed a threat to national security was upheld Tuesday by a federal appellate court. A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia said the CIA had a legitimate concern about the spy's "trustworthiness" in light of the fact that he had information about his involvement in homosexual activity despite suspecting or knowing that the agency considered such involvement to be a matter of security significance. The appeals court overturned a federal judge's ruling that the spy, identified in court papers only by the fictitious name John Doe, was denied due process when then CIA Director William Casey fired him in 1982.

Grand jury refuses to indict senator

NORFOLK (AP) — A grand jury declined Tuesday to indict Senator Charles Robb, voting not to charge him in an alleged sex-slurping scheme against Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder. The outcome of the panel's 18-month probe was announced by the Justice Department in Washington. The grand jury investigating whether Mr. Robb participated in a plan to embarrass Mr. Wilder by leaking a transcript of a secretly recorded telephone conversation. In that 1988 cellular phone conversation, Mr. Wilder, then lieutenant governor, boasted to a supporter that Mr. Robb's political career was over. Mr. Robb, 53, is a son-in-law of the late president Lyndon B. Johnson and served as Virginia governor before he was elected to the Senate in 1988. Though both Democrats, Mr. Wilder and Mr. Robb have feuded for years. Mr. Robb aides had hoped to show that Mr. Wilder was trying to undercut Mr. Robb, who faced allegations of drug use and marital infidelity. Mr. Robb has denied those charges.

Balloon launch put off when hole found

RENO (AP) — An attempt at man's first non-stop balloon flight around the world, already plagued by bad luck for nearly a year, hit another snag Tuesday as crews prepared for a pre-dawn liftoff. A hole the size of a small coin was found in the lower, air-filled balloon used as an anchor on the hough-shaped craft. The upper balloon contains helium; the crew capsule is between the two. "It looks like a burn hole, probably from a torch," said Lynne Newman, wife of balloon pilot Larry Newman. The launch of the Earthwinds Hilton, initially scheduled for between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m., was put on hold until the hole could be repaired. Temperatures dipped below zero (-18 C) for the scheduled launch, which was to carry Mr. Newman, fellow American Don Moses and Russian cosmonaut Vladimir Dzhanibekov 10 kilometers in the air to travel a 32,000-kilometer ride on the jet stream. Fickle weather thwarted a launch 11 months ago in Ohio and had put the programme on hold here since mid-November. The plan calls for the double balloon craft to soar for 12 to 21 days at jetliner altitude. Crew meteorologists said the current high-level winds are nearly ideal and Earthwinds could circle the globe in only 10 to 12 days.

Dutch to have armed forces

THE HAGUE (AP) — The government has unveiled sweeping cuts in the armed forces, including a phased abolition of the nation's 130-year-old draft over the next five years. "Only an all-volunteer army could, in the long term, create sufficient room for the guarantee of quality" in a much smaller force, Defence Minister Rutus Ter Beek said in a statement to parliament.

Security forces relax curfew in riot-hit Bombay

BOMBAY (Agencies) — Security forces Wednesday relaxed curfews imposed on riot-hit areas of Bombay as Indian police reported the frenzied communal violence that has raged for the past week was abating.

Residents in India's commercial capital complained of growing shortages and sharply increased prices for fresh food after seven days of communal bloodshed halted deliveries of petrol, vegetables and staples.

"The city is comparatively peaceful, with the accent on comparatively," said one police officer. "But there's still some reports of scattered stone-throwing and fires."

The Times of India said at least 480 people have died in the dramatic flare-up of Hindu-Muslim bloodshed in Bombay, triple the official toll.

It quoted coroners contacted at six Bombay hospitals as saying the death toll during communal riots since Jan. 6 was 481 and likely to top 500.

At least 77 people have also died in bloodshed in the city of Ahmadabad, to the north of Bombay.

Police said they had relaxed curfews imposed in 20 areas of

Bombay for six hours during the morning. Many shops, closed for almost a week as gangs of arsonists roamed the streets, reopened, and commuter trains were running.

But the country's main stock exchange remained closed. Bombay Member of Parliament Sunil Dutt Wednesday said he was resigning in protest against the "barbarous acts" of looting, arson and killing in Bombay.

Police repeatedly opened fire to quell continued riots in Bombay Tuesday, as authorities said the week-long wave of arson and killings was on the wane and Defence Minister Sharad Pawar appealed for businesses to reopen.

The government has rushed more than 6,000 troops to Bombay to quell the bloodshed in which scores of people have been stabbed and hundreds of houses and shops set ablaze.

The Times of India said the frenzied violence appeared to be part of a deliberate campaign to force Muslims to leave.

Thousands of families have taken trains out of the city, once known for its tolerance.

"It is to strike so much terror in the hearts of the minority com-



Safina Mohammad Pathan, 22, and Ashraf Ali, 10, talk to the press with bloodied, handclapped heads at a small refugee camp in Bombay following one week of communal riots (AFP photo)

unity that its members have no choice other than to flee either to predominantly Muslim parts of the city, or worse still, out of Bombay altogether," the paper said in a front-page editorial headlined "End Bombay's agony."

The latest eruption of violence followed nationwide Hindu-Muslim clashes in December triggered by the destruction of a 16th century mosque by Hindu militants in the northern town of Ayodhya.

Hardline Hindus want India, a nation of 870 million people, declared a Hindu state. There are more than 100 million Muslims in India, and the ruling Congress Party government has said it is essential to maintain the secular nature of India.

Editors of nine-Bombay newspapers Wednesday appealed to Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to urge the bloodbath.

They urged him to declare a state of partial emergency in Bombay, so that full control could be handed over to the army.

They said more security forces were also needed to regain control.

"The city is watching politi-

cians playing power games, while people are being butchered in the streets," the editors said in the appeal printed in the leading business paper, the Economic Times.

In one of the worst incidents Tuesday, a Hindu woman who serves on a municipal council in central Bombay led a mob of 300 Hindus that set fire to 100 shops in a Muslim slum, police said.

The woman — identified as Shantadi Ramesh Baria — and another member of the group were shot and killed when police opened fire and evacuated 45 Muslim families whose homes were destroyed, said Ghanashyam Changanli, an assistant commissioner of police.

"This was a major attack," Mr. Changanli said as he led a few reporters down narrow dirt roads filled with burned huts, cars and debris. "She led the group, exhorting the masses, 'Attack attack.'"

The Hindus followed her because they had heard a rumour that the Muslim population in the community had filled their homes with firebombs and planned to attack the Hindus, Mr. Changanli said.

Police also shot and wounded 11 Hindus as the mob hit the houses with firebombs and rags soaked in kerosene, he said. As in other violent areas of the city, soldiers are now standing guard and trying to prevent more violence.

Angolan conflict spreads but Luanda hopes for talks

LUANDA (R) — Angola's war with Jonas Savimbi's rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) movement has spread to the northern outfields, but government officials in Luanda say they are optimistic peace talks could start within days.

Angolan state radio said Tuesday at least 400 people had died in fighting with a battle for the central city of Cuito.

Both sides claimed to control the greater part of the city but the radio said virtually every building showed signs of the battle and bodies had still to be collected.

A government official said President Jose Eduardo dos Santos was ready to talk to Mr. Savimbi about ways to get their 1991 ceasefire back on track, but only inside Angola.

Mr. Savimbi told Portuguese radio in a satellite-telephone interview they should meet under United Nations auspices in Geneva.

"I am ready at any time, but not in Luanda, never," he said. Angolan Foreign Minister Venancio de Moura said in reaction to Mr. Savimbi's proposal

Bush to release key data on Iran role

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush will release his private testimony to federal prosecutors probing the Iran-contra scandal, along with personal notes he made, White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said Tuesday.

Mr. Fitzwater said the White House would release this week the full text and a videotape of the interview conducted in 1988 by investigators for Lawrence Walsh, the special prosecutor charged with investigating the scandal.

"It will be good for the president because it clearly shows that he doesn't have any involvement here that's questionable in a legal sense," Mr. Fitzwater said.

He said Mr. Bush also would release his "notes that are relevant to Iran-contra" but that "they don't add anything materially to the debate. Certainly they pale in comparison to the transcript."

The existence of the handwritten notes only came to light last month, after the White House offered them to Mr. Walsh's office. Until then, Mr. Bush had insisted all documents had been submitted.

Mr. Bush had asked for the release of the testimony, but Mr. Walsh declined contending it was confidential information that had been presented to a grand jury. He relented by giving Mr. Bush the videotape to "do whatever he wanted."

Mr. Walsh and Mr. Bush have been at bitter odds since the president last month thwarted the prosecutor's probe by granting pardons to six key targets.

At the time of the pardons, Mr. Bush claimed that prosecution of the six amounted to the "criminalisation of policy differences" and said they had acted out of "patriotism."

An angry Walsh in retaliation threatened to focus his attention on Mr. Bush's role in the affair. The White House then pressed for release of the president's testimony.

Mr. Bush has insisted that as vice-president he was "out of the loop" when it came to knowing the details of the scheme, in which arms were covertly sold to Iran and the money diverted to the U.S.-backed contra rebels in Nicaragua.

Georgia stand-off ends, Tajik fighting spreads

MOSCOW (AP) — The Russian military said Tuesday it had settled a tense confrontation with Georgian troops and began turning over weapons to Georgian government troops following a standoff at a Russian army base in the southern former Soviet republic, news media reported.

Russian Major General Viktor Ivanov, head of military intelligence in the region, said 46 Russian servicemen were allowed to leave the base at Lagodekhi, the Interfax news agency said.

The base had been surrounded by Georgian soldiers Sunday. Russians claimed the men were being held hostage, but Georgian troops said they simply surrounded the base to prevent Russians from removing weapons.

The sides, previously had agreed that Russia would turn over the weapons to Georgian forces, part of a process of transferring control of former Soviet arms to local officials.

Gen. Ivanov said the weapons were being transferred to the Georgians, after the 46 servicemen were taken to the capital Tbilisi. He did not say what kind of weapons were involved or how many.

Far to the east, meanwhile, authorities in the Central Asian state of Tajikistan said they continued a campaign to disarm fighters loyal to the ousted government of Islamic and pro-democracy groups, the ITAR-TASS news agency said.

Tajik authorities said troops wrapped up an operation in Obigam, 85 kilometres east of the capital Dushanbe, and turned towards another rebel stronghold in nearby Rogum, Interfax reported.

Rogum is home to a huge hydroelectric power plant run mostly by Russian-speaking workers, Interfax said. The government has accused the pro-Islamic fighters of harassing the ethnic Russians.

One government soldier was killed and another wounded in the operation, Interfax reported. ITAR-TASS quoted Russian officials as saying nobody was hurt. The discrepancy could not immediately be clarified.

Tajikistan, an impoverished state of 5.1 million people, has been consumed by ethnic and clan warfare for nearly a year, killing thousands.

Female U.N. workers and child killed in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH (R) — Two Cambodian women working for the U.N. peacekeeping operation and a seven-year-old child were killed in a rocket and mortar attack north of Phnom Penh late Tuesday, a U.N. spokesman said.

This is the first time UNTAC (the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia) has to deplore loss of life as a result of hostile action since UNTAC arrived 10 months ago," the spokesman told a Wednesday news conference.

The attack occurred shortly after 11:30 p.m. and involved 40 men, divided into four groups, the UNTAC spokesman said adding that the raiders infiltrated from the north, a known Khmer Rouge guerrilla sanctuary.

Just before the ground attack, rockets and mortars were fired at the UNTAC site located in Ang Kron village, 15 kilometres east of Siem Reap provincial capital.

"Half an hour later they attacked the location using AK-47s (automatic assault rifles) to fire at UNTAC personnel and Cambodian civilians," the spokesman said.

The women victims were identified as Ty Sary, 43, and Hang Vibeth, 20, who were sheltering in a tent at the time of the attack. A seven-year-old child was also killed, the spokesman said.

The women were working with the UNTAC department charged with organising elections, the first for Cambodia after decades of war and political turmoil.

Two UNTAC policemen, an Indian and a Ghanaian, were injured in the attack as was a 70-year-old Cambodian man, all of whom were listed as in stable condition at a U.N. field hospital.

The spokesman said the attackers deliberately fired at the tent used by the U.N. electoral team for registering voters.

"Several people were present at the time and two U.N. personnel died as a result of the attack," he said.

A Bangladesh rapid reaction platoon was sent to the site but arrived after the attackers had fled, the spokesman said.

While the identity of the attackers was unknown, he said, Khmer Rouge guerrillas had been active in the district recently.

COLUMN

Zimbabwe cancels mayor's installation

HARARE (R) — Local officials said Tuesday they had cancelled the installation Friday of Harare councillor Noel Chaya as the new mayor of Zimbabwe's capital, Mr. Chaya, a member of the ruling ZANU-PF party who was elected mayor by councillors last month, has been widely criticised by Harare residents after disclosing that he had once been fined nearly 1,400 for contravening liquor laws. In his role as mayor, Mr. Harare's highest civic leader, Mr. Chaya would have had to host foreign leaders visiting the capital. Outgoing Mayor Simon Chikwavaire is likely to remain in office until a new mayor is elected, officials said.

Italy decriminalises personal drug use

ROME (R) — Italy Tuesday decriminalised the personal use of drugs, admitting the failure of its tough drug law which filled Italian prisons with addicts and did little to reduce consumption. The cabinet approved the new drug legislation, which had been proposed by Prime Minister Giuliano Amato to reduce prison overcrowding. Under the new measure, about 1,000 inmates who had been imprisoned for drug use will be released, officials said. The new law requires administrative sanctions instead of prison terms, for users of drugs such as heroin, cocaine and cannabis. These sanctions include the revocation of driver's licences, gun permits and passports. Anyone found with a quantity of drugs three times more than what is considered an average amount for personal consumption is charged as a drug trafficker, according to the law. The cabinet's action repeals 1990 legislation which had made the personal use of drugs a crime. Before that law was adopted, only trafficking and the sale of drugs had been a crime in Italy.

Sex attacker escapes charges after jail-chapel rape

LONDON (R) — A convicted sex attacker raped a woman in the chapel of a top-security British jail — and escaped prosecution. Prison officers Tuesday blamed what they called libellous of prison life for the assault on a married woman employee at Long Lartin prison, near Evesham, central England. She decided not to press charges. The rapist, who had three convictions for sex attacks, was working as an orderly in the chapel. He was moved to another prison and will not face prosecution. Bob Pitt, spokesman for the Prison Officers' Association at Long Lartin, said: "Inmates are allowed into areas where there are civilian members of staff, without uniformed supervision. It is one of the inevitable consequences of an over-ambitious programme of liberalisation and hopelessly inadequate staffing levels."

Female U.N. workers and child killed in Cambodia

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Too few U.S. doctors slapped for incompetence, health group says

WASHINGTON (R) — Too few physicians in the United States are disciplined for incompetence, negligence, drug abuse and patient abuse resulting in thousands of avoidable deaths and injuries of patients every year, a consumer group said Tuesday. The number of medical licenses revoked and suspended and doctors placed on probation would be five to six times higher if the state boards were policing physicians effectively, Dr. Sidney Wolfe, head of Public Citizens Health Research Group, said at a news conference. "There is no excuse why the majority of states are betraying patients or not providing adequate discipline of doctors," he said. Medical boards in the south were found to be most effective while those in the north-east, with the exception of Vermont, were least effective, the consumer group said in a report on a nationwide survey of medical sanctions.

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